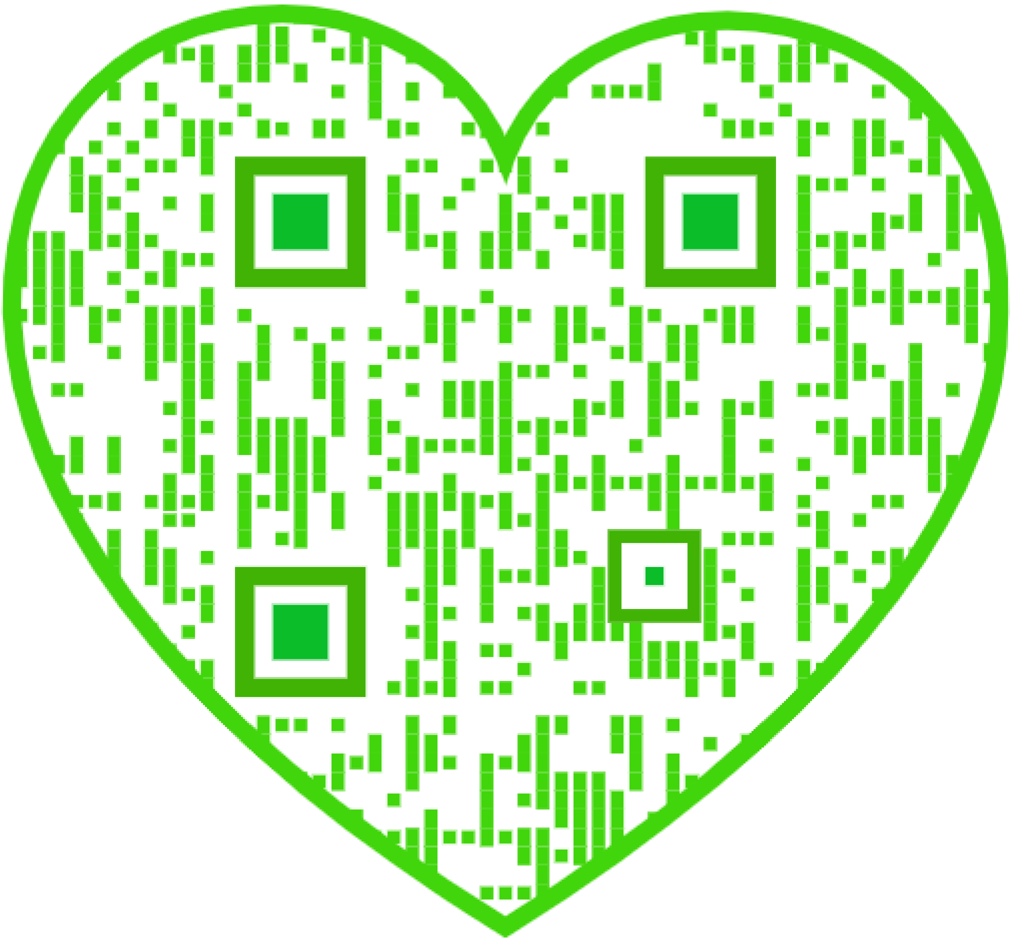
4X4 AUSTRALIA

4X4 OF THE YEAR 2025

TOP WAGONS BATTLE IT OUT!

TITLE FIGHT

04
9 313006 027133
APRIL 2025
ISSUE NO.502
$11.95 (NZ $12.95)



ALL NEW ZENITH BAR

ENGINEERED TOUGH. DESIGNED TO PERFORM.

Bridging functionality and style, ARB's Zenith Bar is designed to turn heads whilst providing your vehicle with industry-leading protection and performance.

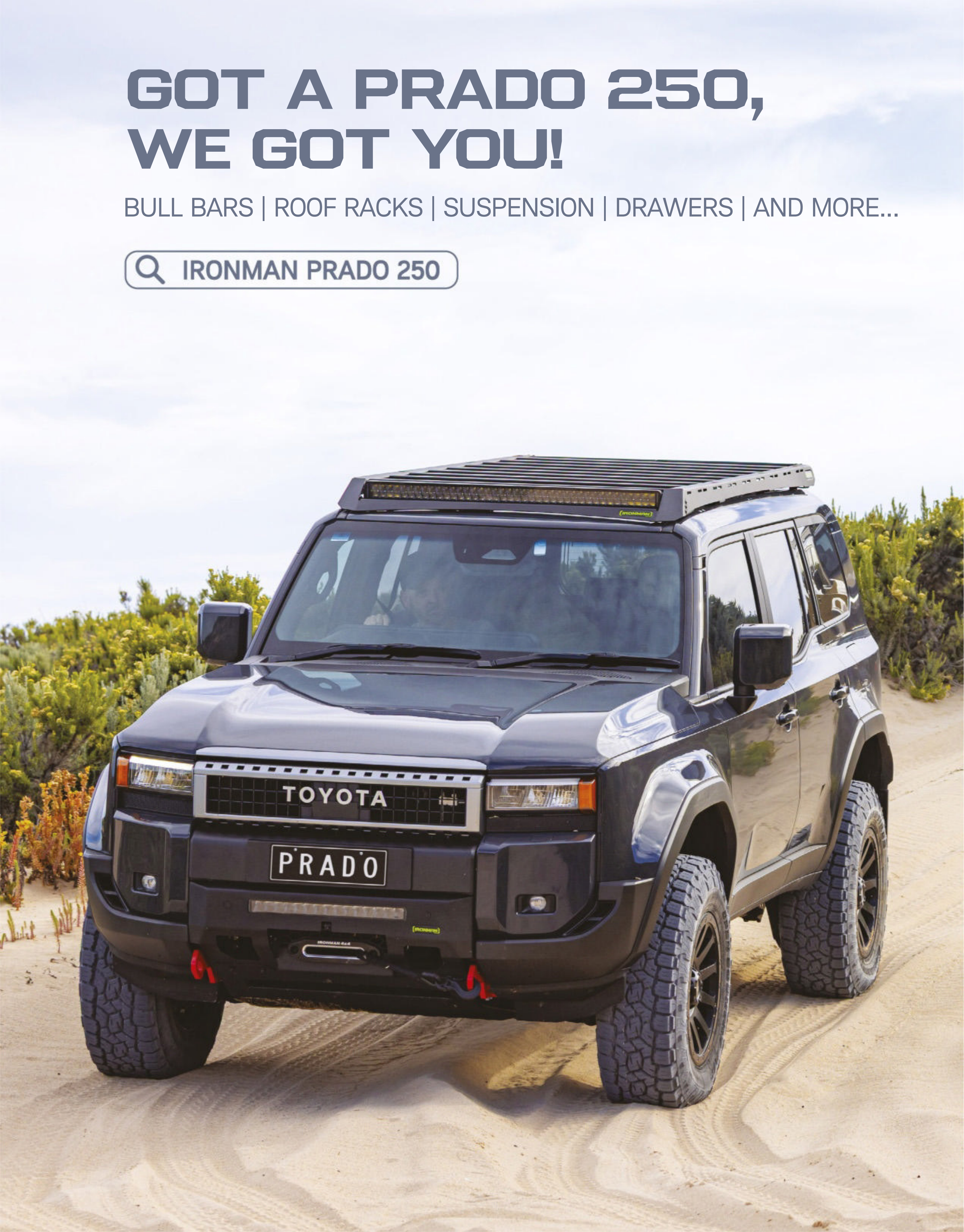
- **Engineered Steel Construction:** Superior engineering ensures maximised strength-to-weight ratio.
- **Retention of Original Functions:** Retains function of SRS air bags, parking sensors, front camera and radar.
- **Integrated Bash Plate:** Durable protection of vulnerable vehicle components.
- **Included Recovery Points:** Built-in 8T forged recovery points for easy vehicle recovery.
- **Steel Winch Cradle:** Designed to accommodate a wide range of winches.
- **Integrated Lighting Solutions:** Compatible with ARB's range of NACHO Quatro driving lights.
- **Optimised Approach Angles:** Refined design maximises clearance, providing better manoeuvrability over obstacles.
- **Durable Finish:** Meta-prep primer and powder-coat standard finish ensure corrosion resistance, or can be colour coded on both the bar and/or bash plate.

LEARN MORE

www.arb.com.au/zenith

ARB

4X4 ACCESSORIES


GOT A PRADO 250,
WE GOT YOU!
BULL BARS | ROOF RACKS | SUSPENSION | DRAWERS | AND MORE...
IRONMAN PRADO 250
TOYOTA
PRADO

TOYO
APEX
IRONMAN 4X4

MAXXIS

RAZR

TOUGH AS
FOR ALL TERRAINS

Extraordinary traction and reliability for 4x4 and SUV adventuring on bitumen and off the beaten track.

The Maxxis RAZR range has every corner covered, whatever your drive.

RAZRMT772 RAZRAT-811 RAZRAT-S RAZRHT780

MAXXISTyresAustralia @Maxxis.Tyres.Australia Maxxis Tyres Australia

Ford
XLT
RANGER
MAXXIS
maxxistyres.com.au

Contents

APR 2025

www.facebook.com/4x4aus www.4x4australia.com.au

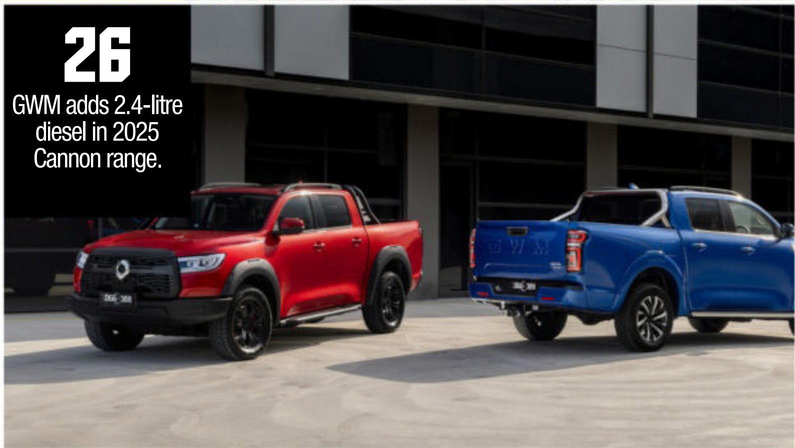
4X4 AUSTRALIA

4X4 OF THE YEAR 2025

32 WAGON TRAIN
Six finalists made the cut in our test to find the market's best 4x4 wagon.

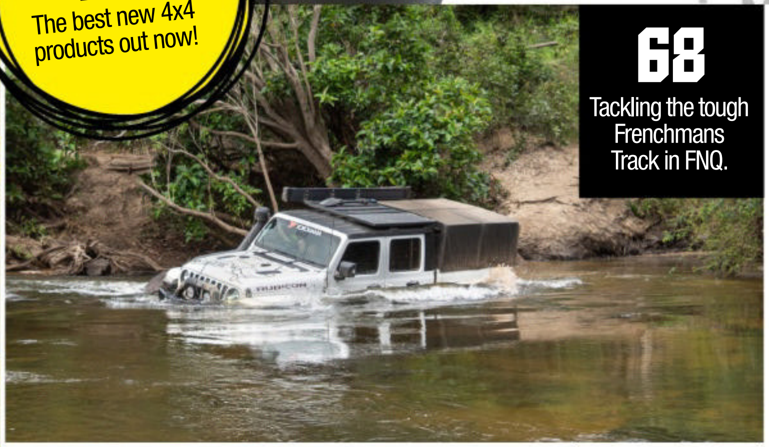
20
X-Terrain flagship heads Isuzu MU-X fleet for 2025.

26
GWM adds 2.4-litre diesel in 2025 Cannon range.



FIND US ONLINE AT 4X4AUSTRALIA.COM.AU

PAGE 112
The best new 4x4 products out now!



68
Tackling the tough Frenchmans Track in FNQ.

80
Go off-road in the Everest Tremor wagon.

88
Travelling the New England area of the Great Divide.

96
Our LC79 gets a Scavanger snorkel and filter.

4CAST

10 4WORD
12 LATEST NEWS FROM THE 4X4 WORLD
16 TRAVEL BULLETIN

4X4 DRiVE

20 DRIVE: 2025 ISUZU MU-X X-TERRAIN
26 DRIVE: 2025 GWM CANNON
32 DRIVE: 2025 4X4 OF THE YEAR
80 DRIVE: 2025 FORD EVEREST TREMOR
118 READERS' RIGS
120 SHED: MITSUBISHI TRITON GLS
122 SHED: 2025 MAZDA BT-50 GT

4X4 EXPLORE

68 FRENCHMANS TRACK, FAR NORTH QLD
88 NEW ENGLAND, NEW SOUTH WALES

4X4 GEAR

96 LC 79 BUILD: SCAVENGER SNORKEL
104 TESTED: THE BUSH COMPANY 180 AWNING
106 TESTED: GRIPSPORT BIKE RACK
108 TESTED: DOWNUNDERLUST CANVAS
112 NEW PRODUCTS FOR FOURBIES

THE SCORE

124 ALL THE STATS, FIGURES AND PRICES OF EVERY 4X4 YOU CAN BUY

PARTiNG PiC

130 YOUR SHENANIGANS CAUGHT ON FILM

4WORD

MATT RAUDONIKIS

DISTRACTED DRIVERS

I'VE spent a lot of time driving many different new vehicles over the last couple of months. Between the 4X4 Of The Year test and multiple new-model launches, I've sampled many new 4x4s and have been reacquainted with some old favourites.

One standout from driving all these different new cars is that the newer they get, the more annoying and distracting chimes they emit.

While vehicle manufacturers and do-gooders like to warn us about the dangers of distracted driving, and are happy to point the blame at drivers themselves, the onus should be on the vehicle companies and the distractions they create.

The chimes, bleeps, buzzers and bongs that come from the dash of these new vehicles has become so relentless that I've had to teach myself to tune out from them altogether; I reckon they have become the biggest distractions of all when they prompt the driver to take his/her eyes off the road ahead to see what the warning is for.

When you hear a warning chime you look down at the dash which is a complex array of lights and information, some of them miniscule and not always obvious. If you paid heed to all of them you would never have the time to look at the road ahead, in which case you'd really hope the autonomous systems would do their job in preventing you from running into something while you are looking at the dash.

Perhaps that is why many new vehicles have that little widget in the gauges in front of the driver to show where the vehicle is sitting in the lane. It's a symbol of the vehicle with lines either side of it representing the lane, and they light up and warn you when you drift one way or the other. The widget mimics the image you have out through the windscreen, which is a far better indicator of where you actually are than if you're looking down at the stupid dashboard!

Heaven forbid that the distracting warning should be about anything important!

Then you get in the LandCruiser 76 Series or the Ineos Grenadier, which have very limited levels of safety tech. The Ineos has almost none (for the time being) while the LandCruiser just has a lane-keeping assist that occasionally pulls the vehicle back to the centre of the lane with an autonomous application of the brakes, but for the most part these are non-intrusive systems. More importantly, the LandCruiser has great visibility out of its deep windscreen and side windows, so you'll see any potential hazards in the real world, with your own eyes, not on the dash!

Modern safety tech saves lives, there's no denying that, but loading vehicles up with excessive tech just because it exists will prove more hazardous than not having any of that tech at all.

Matt

4X4 AUSTRALIA

"4x4s, the places you can take them, and the gear to get you there"

EDITORIAL
Editor Matt Raudonikis
Art Director Jamie Burgess
Sub-Editor John Panozzo
Staff Journalist Tristan Tancredi
Editor-At-Large Ron Moon
Brand Sales Manager Scott Crowley
Staff Photographer Ellen Dewar

4X4 MEDIA
Managing Director Christian Clark
General Manager – Technology Tim Kenington

CONTACT US
SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES:
Ph: (02) 8315 2092 - Mon-Fri 9AM-5PM (EST)
Email: subscriptions@wheelsmedia.com.au
Web: www.4x4australia.com.au
Post: 4x4 Media PO Box 161, Hornsby, NSW, 1630

GENERAL ENQUIRIES
4x4australia@4x4media.com.au

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES
Scott Crowley
scott.crowely@4x4media.com.au

4X4 MEDIA

Published by 4X4 Media,
ABN 59 677 373 536
© 2025. All rights reserved.
ISSN: 0726-2418

4X4 AUSTRALIA

SUBSCRIBE TO 4X4 AUSTRALIA

Save up to 37%

Head to
4x4.subscription.com.au
or call (02) 8315 2092

4X4 AUSTRALIA
ISSUE 500!
BALLIS
4X4 AUSTRALIA
4X4 OF THE YEAR 2025
TOP WAGONS BATTLE IT OUT!
TITLE FIGHT
EASTER ESCAPADES + GETAWAY GEAR
UTE!
ITS THE FARM TRUCK TREATMENT

TERRAIN TAMER
DIFF LOCKER KIT
ELocker

TRACTION THAT GETS YOU HERE AND HOME

The Terrain Tamer ELocker Kit is designed specifically to assist in the fitment of the Harrop Eaton Elocker, consisting of all of the bearings and gaskets required, as well as the unit itself.

Harrop ELocker's electromagnetic locking, 4 pinion, forged gear design performs as an open differential until you need instant traction.

Manufactured in Melbourne utilising Eaton's patented technology, the ELocker has a simple 'drop in' fitting process and allows the front and rear axles to lock independently. Each ELocker is engaged at the push of an electronic button.

- Made in Australia
- Manually Selected
- Electronically Activated

TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts

For information visit **terraintamer.com** or call **1300 888 444**

2025 FORD RANGER PHEV PRICING AND SPECS CONFIRMED

FORD HAS REVEALED KEY INFORMATION REGARDING ITS PLUG-IN HYBRID RANGER

FORD has revealed pricing and specifications for its Ranger PHEV, with the plug-in hybrid ute to be priced from $71,990 when it launches in Australia in mid-2025.

A key rival to the BYD Shark and and GWM Cannon PHEV utes, the Ranger PHEV line-up will consist of four variants when it launches: The base-spec XLT ($71,990 MLP); the Sport ($75,990); the Wildtrak ($79,990); and the Stormtrak special launch edition ($86,990).

Compared to the combustion-only powered Ranger equivalents, the PHEV is significantly dearer. Spec-for-spec, the 2.0L XLT is currently priced at $63,640; the 3.0L XLT at $68,840; the 2.0L Sport at $66,140; the 3.0L Sport at $71,340; the 2.0L Wildtrak at $69,640; and the 3.0L Wildtrak at $74,840.

The PHEV Ranger struggles to compete against its biggest rival, the BYD Shark ($57,900), on price alone – and Ford will have to rely on the pedigree of the Ranger nameplate to entice prospective customers.

"The addition of PHEV to the Ranger line-up marks the first time in history that Australia's best-selling nameplate has been offered with an electrified plug-in hybrid option," said Andrew Birkic, president and CEO, Ford Australia.

"Our Aussie engineering and design team have created a plug-in hybrid that allows diesel ute buyers to begin their electrification journey without sacrificing any of the core capability that they need from a truck – whether they use it for work or play."

The Ranger PHEV combines a 138kW-411Nm 2.3-litre turbocharged four-cylinder EcoBoost petrol engine with a 75kW electric motor and 11.8kWh battery, for a maximum claimed total output of 207kW and 697Nm. The set-up implements a new 10-speed automatic Modular Hybrid Transmission (MHT) that offers many benefits including a range of hybrid and EV modes, as well as regenerative braking. The Ranger PHEV utilises the same full-time 4x4 system and rear diff lock as per the regular Ranger range.

Key figures for the Ranger PHEV are a claimed combined fuel economy of just 2.7L/100km, an electric

FORD PHEV RANGE

There are four models to choose from in the Ford Ranger PHEV line-up.

RATINGS
Ranger PHEV combines a 2.3L turbo-petrol four with a 75kW electric motor and 11.8kWh battery, for a claimed output of 207kW and 697Nm.

driving energy consumption of 187Wh/km, CO2 emissions of 66g/km and a 70L fuel tank.

The EV modes include four options: Auto EV; EV Now; EV Later; and EV Charge. Auto EV automatically switches between the combustion engine and the battery to prioritise power or efficiency; EV Now uses only the battery to save fuel; EV Later conserves battery power by using petrol power; and EV Charge employs the petrol engine to act as a generator by recharging the battery.

The Ranger PHEV out-muscles the Shark when you take a peek at its towing and payload specs. Where the Shark is limited to just 2500kg, the Ranger PHEV maintains the Ranger's 3500kg braked towing capacity. Plus, the payload capacities of all four variants are greater than the Shark's 790kg – 973kg XLT, 934kg Sport, 885kg Wildtrak and 808kg Stormtrak. All variants have a GVM of 3500kg and a GCM of 6580kg. In addition, the Ranger PHEV's tray exceeds 1600mm in length and can now accommodate two European pallets.

However, the Ranger PHEV is hindered by an electric driving range of just 48km, which is well below the Shark's maximum range of up to 100km.

"We know how important carrying and towing heavy loads is to our Ranger customers, so this was a top priority in the development of Ranger PHEV," said Phil Millar, chief program engineer, Ford Ranger PHEV. "But there is more to safe towing and hauling ability than numbers on a spec sheet – we've also ensured Ranger PHEV comes fitted with class-leading technology like our integrated trailer brake controller.

"Beyond just a simple trailer brake controller, the Ranger PHEV's system is fully integrated with the rest of its active safety suite, meaning features like the electronic stability control factor in the trailer's brakes and activate them as necessary."

All Ranger PHEV models in the line-up are equipped with a Pro Power Onboard system, which essentially allows owners to use the 11.8kWh battery to power electronics when travelling to remote campsites or at the worksite.

"Now instead of having to carry a heavy generator or batteries that take up precious room and can often be very noisy, a Ranger PHEV owner can plug virtually anything they might want to power directly into the vehicle itself," said Millar.

"With 15amp sockets in the tray, that's equivalent to having a powered caravan park site with you anywhere you might want to explore – the possibilities are almost endless!

"We've engineered Pro Power Onboard for maximum convenience in real-world situations. It functions with the car locked and when it is plugged in to charge, plus if the battery should deplete completely the 2.3-litre EcoBoost then kicks in to keep everything running."

Ranger PHEV models score a few new features, too, including an electronic fuel-filler release, new push/pull door on the passenger side, new-look wheel and tyre design, Acoustic Vehicle Alert system, and high-voltage electric air-con and heating.

NEW ISUZU POWERTRAINS TO COMBAT NVES REGS

ISUZU 2.2-LITRE TURBO-DIESEL AND 1.9-LITRE HYBRID ENGINES "UNDER STUDY", WITH ALL-ELECTRIC BEV ALSO A POSSIBILITY

MULTIPLE powertrain options are currently "under study" for the D-MAX and MU-X, with Isuzu UTE Australia (IUA) considering ways to reduce its CO2 outputs to meet strict New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) regulations.

Isuzu has confirmed both the 2.2-litre turbo-diesel engine and the 1.9-litre hybrid used in Thailand are on its radar, but the Japanese marque stopped short of confirming whether we'll officially see either powertrain locally.

While hesitant to discuss any details about future products, IUA did mention it is looking at every powertrain solution it has globally, but doubled-down on the fact that whatever powertrain is chosen would need to be fit for purpose for Australia.

"While we are working on solutions, it's important for us to mention these solutions are fit for purpose. They're not compromised. We don't want to bring something to market ... that just ticks a box," said Mark Harman, PR manager at IUA. "We've always done a very good job with localisation, to ensure our products are Australianised for our market."

"We can bring out a product, but whether it meets consumer needs should be the first question we ask. Because there's no point bringing out a product no-one wants because it doesn't do the job it needs to do," added Ben Jaegar, head of sales at IUA.

IUA has continued with its well-proven selection of drivetrains for both its MY25 D-MAX and MU-X vehicles, currently offering a 110kW-350Nm 1.9-litre turbo-diesel and the well-proven 140kW-450Nm 4JJ1 3.0-litre turbo-diesel – both mated to a six-speed automatic transmission.

"At this point in time we've taken the direction to retain our current drivetrains, but it doesn't mean it's going to be like that forever. We will explore those avenues. The reality is, we're going to have to evolve as well – so that will happen," said Jaeger.

"Different brands will have different technologies, and different directions to try and offset CO2. No doubt it will be difficult with the type of vehicles we have.

"There are going to be stages when you're not compliant, because the targets are very strict. That's the reality. So we'll be compliant as best we can to reduce our CO2 outputs," Jaeger said.

An all-electric D-MAX that is slated to arrive in Norway in 2025 is also on IUA's watchlist. In fact, in 2024, Isuzu Japan said in a press release: "Launching in select mainland Europe markets such as Norway in 2025, D-MAX BEV will be rolled out to the UK, Australia, Thailand and other countries based on market needs and the maturity of EV charging infrastructure."

When pushed if we'll see an electric D-MAX in Aus in the next few years, IUA was more coy. "I don't think we can answer that one," Jaegar said. "The vehicle that is going to be released in Norway may not meet the requirements of our customers. It's a very different market, different usage, different infrastructure for charging – all those sorts of things go into it. It's a different volume market, for that matter.

"Is it one of the technologies being reviewed? Obviously it is because that's a global powertrain that will be available to other markets. Whether it's right for this market? That's the decision that needs to be made.

"That particular powertrain is definitely one that is under study."

piranha
OFF ROAD PRODUCTS

NEW PRODUCTS FROM PIRANHA!

www.piranhaoffroad.com.au

DRIVING LIGHTS
& RECOVERY GEAR

Piranha's new driving lights are built tough with die-cast aluminium housings, OSRAM chips, excellent reflector design, high impact sleek rimless design polycarbonate lenses with black powder coated stainless steel mounting brackets and bolts included, for that stealth look.

Complement your off-road adventure and never get stuck by equipping your 4x4 vehicle with Piranha's new Recovery Gear. Manufactured and designed to the highest quality, our Recovery Kit will make sure you have everything you need for any situation. With 7 fitting locations around Australia and our online store open 24/7 we're here to help you get to those hard to reach places.

BATTERY TRAYS
Over 150 different models available

DUAL BATTERY MANAGEMENT
DBE140SF Smart Isolator &
DBDC1230s DC-DC Charger with Solar Input

SNOW & MUD CHAINS

SUSPENSION PRODUCTS
Heavy Duty Upgrades & lift Kits

**PREMIUM ALUMINIUM UTE TRAYS , STEEL UTE TRAYS,
AND FIBREGLASS CANOPIES**

**SCAN TO VIEW
MORE PRODUCTS**

APLED · piranha OFF ROAD PRODUCTS · BLUE MAX

ENGEL A LEGEND IN RELIABILITY · MyCOOLMAN · Enerdrive · MSA · SAFARI SNORKEL · GME · Runva · RAM MOUNTS

www.piranhaoffroad.com.au

4/ 383 Dorset Road, Bayswater, VIC 3155 • (03) 9762 1200 · /piranhaoffroadproducts · PiranhaOffroad

TRAVEL BULLETIN

ALL THE LATEST 4X4 NEWS AND EVENTS

Now is the time to get out and about to enjoy this great land and support the communities. Experienced adventurer Ron Moon has listed a few upcoming highlights, as well as essential track info. As always, check with event organisers before locking in your plans.

The Simpson Desert is now open for touring.

ENJOY THE SIMPSON DESERT (QLD/SA)

The mighty Simpson Desert is open once again for adventurous travellers to enjoy. Don't forget the permits you will require.

For the latest information for the Queensland side of the desert go to parks.desi.qld.gov.au/parks/munga-thirri/about and for the South Australian side go to www.parks.sa.gov.au/parks/munga-thirri-simpson-desert-national-park

BANKA BANKA STATION (NT)

Set on the Barkly Tablelands, north of Tennant Creek and just off the Stuart Highway, this sprawling 1400km² cattle station is rich in natural and cultural attractions. The property accommodation ranges from camping, powered sites, and king, single and double cabins.

The traditional owners continue to use Banka Banka and play an active role in the management of the property. Learn about the traditional use of their country and take a walk to important cultural sites such as Kajanpurra Waterhole and Punkkurr Punkkurra Spring. Check out www.bankabankawest.com.au

JUST LUCKY (WA)

Located 30 minutes south of Kalbarri township, this beachfront nature-based camping area is an ideal off-the-beaten-track getaway. Accessible only by 4x4, campers spend their days by the beach, swimming, fishing and four-wheel driving or just relaxing.

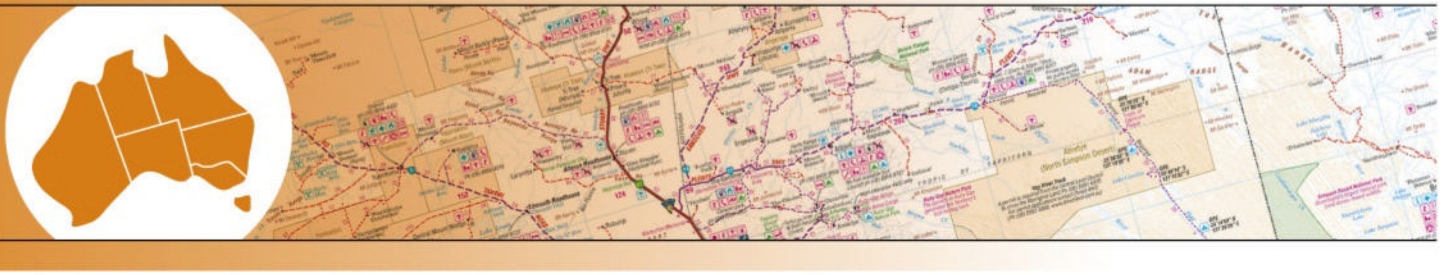
The camping area is nestled in the sand dunes and suitable for tents and camper trailers. Facilities include bush toilets, a chemical loo dump point and rubbish bins. Please note that fresh water is not available so campers must be self-sufficient.

Campsites are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Fees are $15/night/vehicle.

ALONG THE STUART HIGHWAY (SA)

If you are heading along the Stuart Highway on your travels this year and are looking for a place to stop for the night, then this may be a good one for you. Wirraminna Station is located 2km off the Stuart Highway between Pimba and Glendambo.

The station offers 10 large drive-through caravan sites and there is plenty of room for pets, and loads of space for kids to ride their bikes. There is 5G Telstra phone service but no Optus. Call 0488 068 956 or email wirraminnastation-accommodation@gmail.com for more information and to make a booking.



Cape Portland is one of many of Tasmania's natural attractions, but keep alert for bushfires.

GRAMPIANS ARE OPEN (VIC)

Since December 2024, several bushfires have impacted large parts of the Grampians NP (Gariwerd) including the Serra, Mt William and Victoria ranges, Victory Valley, Wallaby Rocks and Central Corridor areas.

While some areas remain closed, popular open areas include the Brambuk National Park & Cultural Centre and nearby walks, Boroka Lookout, Reeds Lookout, Mackenzie Falls and Zumsteins picnic area and the Wonderland area, including the Pinnacle, Venus Baths and Grand Canyon.

For the latest on the area and places to enjoy visit the Parks Victoria website.

OUT ON THE DARLING (NSW)

Situated on the west side of the Darling River between Menindee and Wilcannia, Nelia Gaari Station is a sheep grazing property that offers a unique and welcoming spot to park your caravan, campervan or 4x4 vehicle for short or extended stays. Go boating, fishing, yabbying or exploring, play a round of golf, or just kick back around the campfire.

Your hosts Lily and Greg invite you to share their beautiful stretch of the Darling River. Visit www.neliagaari.com.au for more info.

Brisbane
Darwin
Sydney
Alice Springs
Canberra
Perth
Melbourne

CLOSED AREAS (TAS)

There have been some large bushfires in Tasmania's western areas and many locations and tracks have been closed to the public.

If you're heading that way make sure you check out https://parks.tas.gov.au for up-to-date details on what is open and what is closed.

If you have questions or concerns about a closure please contact the affected park or reserve.

MSA 4X4

TOWING MIRRORS

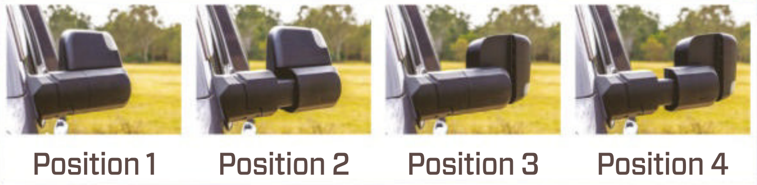
NOW WITH CAMERA PROVISION

When extended the large, single mirror allows the driver to see beyond the caravan, trailer or boat and avoids the confusion of multi-lens mirrors for everyday driving.

msa
TAKE US WITH YOU®

MSA4X4.COM.AU | GEAR FOR **LIFE**
Available from over 800 stockists Australia wide.

Four mirror positions to suit all driving situations...



MSA Towing Mirrors mount onto a vehicle in the same position as the existing mirrors.

Please check surroundings for safety.

Ford Ranger PY Model Shown

CAMERA PROVISION*

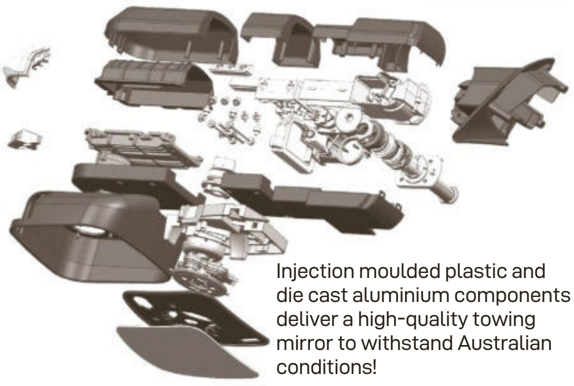
Headset display will provide the same view as the existing factory fitted mirrors.

**Selected vehicle models ONLY.*

MSA prides itself on being at the leading edge of industry trends and it is our vision to stay there. The camera feature in towing mirrors, has long been a topic of discussion in the 4WD, caravanning and adventure industry. The MSA team has recently finalised the implementation of the camera provision into the highly popular MSA POWER FOLD™ Towing Mirrors Range.

These mirrors share the same SEMA award-winning, large single-mirror design that has made MSA Towing Mirrors so popular among 4WD and adventure enthusiasts. The only visual difference is the integration of the camera housing into the design. The mirror head pivots on a heavy-duty extension slide attached to a solid base and the extension slide allows the mirror to extend out when towing and return to a standard driving position, when not re equired. All MSA Towing Mirrors are ADR compliant, covered by a manufacturers 5 Year Warranty and available in black or chrome.

SHOP NOW



Injection moulded plastic and die cast aluminium components deliver a high-quality towing mirror to withstand Australian conditions!

FEATURES

- Factory camera provision
- Power fold at the touch of a button
- Four different mirror positions
- Large, single mirror lens
- Adjustable viewing angles
- Vertical and horizontal adjustment
- Unique pivot design
- Fold inwards or outwards
- ADR Compliant
- Injection moulded and die-cast aluminium components

5 YEAR WARRANTY

ADR COMPLIANT

2020 SEMA GLOBAL MEDIA AWARDS WINNER

MSA 4X4 ACCESSORIES

4X4AUSCPTMV1 1024

ISUZU
454·MA8
QUEENSLAND - SUNSHINE STATE
GO YOUR OWN WAY

MU-X GOES UPMARKET

THE ISUZU MU-X HAS BEEN UPDATED FOR 2025 AND A NEW TOP-OF-THE-RANGE X-TERRAIN MODEL HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE LINE-UP

WORDS TRISTAN TANCREDI PHOTOS ISUZU UTE AUSTRALIA

ISUZU Ute Australia (IUA) has revised its MU-X model line-up for 2025, with the Japanese marque adding a new flagship X-Terrain variant atop the model hierarchy, as well as refreshing the style and updating tech across the now four-model line-up.

The changes have resulted in a price increase across the 4x4 range, with the entry-level LS-M now $54,400 (up from $53,400) and the top-spec X-Terrain $74,400 (up from the previous top-spec MY24 LS-T model's $70,990). Against its biggest seven-seat rival, the Ford Everest, these changes are rather insignificant, as the bigger Everest still costs considerably more spec-for-spec. Comparatively, the Everest 4x4 is priced at $59,240 for the base-spec Ambiente and tops out at $81,200 for the top-spec Platinum.

Headlining the changes to the local line-up is the addition of the new X-Terrain flagship that is the highest-spec MU-X ever seen in local showrooms. Distinguishing the X-Terrain from lower grades are gloss black 20-inch alloy wheels with 265/50R20 Bridgestone tyres; updated interior upholstery, dashboard and door trim; red LED ambient lighting; gloss black front grille with updated LED fog lights; lower body side skirt; underbody rear spoiler; and X-Terrain badging.

POWERTRAIN & PERFORMANCE

FOR now at least, the MU-X will continue to be powered by either a 1.9-litre diesel making a claimed 110kW and 350Nm or a 3.0-litre diesel making a claimed 140kW and 450Nm. Both engines are mated to a six-speed auto transmission but multiple powertrain alternatives are currently under study at Isuzu HQ for future product, so this could be one of the last iterations of the venerable 4JJ3 engine.

In its attempt to combat tightening NVES (New Vehicle Efficiency Standard) regulations in the coming years, IUA has admitted it is currently considering a number of powertrain options already in service in other parts of the world, including a 2.2-litre diesel and 1.9-litre hybrid in Thailand, and an all-electric D-MAX in Norway, but the brand is steadfast in its vision that it will only bring options to Australia that are suited to local conditions and consumer preferences.

For now the 4JJ3 continues to be resolute in its performance. Heralded for being tough and reliable, the 3.0-litre powertrain gets on with the job with minimal fuss. Capable when the going gets tough off road – especially when combined with the part-time 4x4 system, rear diff lock and Rough Terrain mode – the engine is equally suited to highway driving; it will sit at 100km/h at around 1500rpm and effortlessly whittle away the miles.

Still, the six-speed automatic isn't the smoothest shifting transmission on the 4x4 market – the 10-speeder mated to the Everest's bi-turbo is much more slick – and some throttle lag remains when pushing the accelerator pedal into the footwell when overtaking.

Fuel consumption is listed at 8.3L/100km, and previous testing of this engine – when combining on- and off-road driving – puts it more realistically at around 11L/100km. With an 80-litre fuel tank that should, in theory, allow for plenty of kilometres between fuel stops.

For MY25, Isuzu has also revised the MU-X's suspension across the range, with all models receiving retuned dampers with 6.6 per cent larger diameter pistons – the internal diameter up from 30 to 32mm. Without driving against the previous model, it is hard to discern whether this has had a noticeable effect on performance, but no doubt it has. We're told there's potential for more improvement should IUA consider collaboratinf with Walkinshaw for an MU-X Blade. But that's a wait and see …

Also updated for 2025 is Lane Keep Assist which has been refined to actively maintain the vehicle's position in the centre of the lane "rather than reacting to the outer lane markings". When activated, we found the MU-X would often ping-pong between lines in its attempt to pinpoint its positioning, creating a sense of anxiety when vehicles were on either side. Once settled and on dead-straight roads, though, the vehicle would remain in the

Despite highway tyres on 20-inch rims, the MU-X displayed proficiency as a competent off-roader.

OFF-ROAD PERFORMANCE

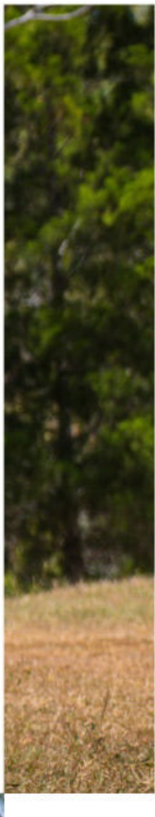
WHERE the MU-X makes up for some of its shortcomings on bitumen is its versatility in the transition to dirt.

Despite the X-Terrain's highway tyres on 20-inch wheels, IUA still took a convoy of journos to a seriously difficult off-road track within the Black Duck Valley 4x4 park near Brisbane, where we were able to properly sample the MU-X's off-road potential with the rear diff locked and Rough Terrain Mode (RTM) engaged.

Rough Terrain Mode was first implemented when this-generation MU-X debuted in late 2021, and the traction control system has now been refined to work across a broader range of surfaces. In theory, activating RTM in combination with a locked rear differential should make the MU-X an extremely proficient off-roader … and it does. The convoy of vehicles walked up the track that no showroom-stock vehicle should dare tread.

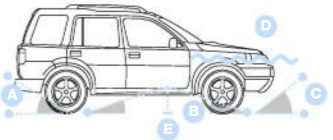
Isuzu has also refined the existing Tyre Pressure Monitoring System to provide a more user-friendly experience by displaying real-time pressures and temperatures on both the 7.0-inch MID and 9.0-inch infotainment screens. As a result, only the base-spec LS-M misses out on this feature.

Another handy addition for any rock-crawling fun is the underfloor view – a la Land Rover Defender – provided by the new 360-degree surround-view monitor (LS-T and X-Terrain only). It's a clever piece of technology that makes it easier to clear big rocks and the like when driving off road.



MU-X X-TERRAIN

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	26.4°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	23.1°
C APPROACH ANGLE	29.2°
D WADING DEPTH	800mm
E GROUND CLEARANCE	235mm



WHAT DOES THE MY25 MU-X COST?

Model (4x4 only)	Engine	Price	Difference
LS-M	1.9L	$54,400	+$1000
LS-U	1.9L	$61,400	+$1500
LS-M	3.0L	$56,400	+$1000
LS-U	3.0L	$63,400	+$1500
LS-T	3.0L	$71,400	+$3410
X-TERRAIN	3.0L	$74,400	NEW

*MY2024 prices based on February 2025 pricing guide

THE MU-X IS NOW MORE AGGRESSIVE IN ITS STYLING, WITH SHARPER LINES, CHISELLED ANGLES, REDESIGNED BI-LED HEADLIGHTS AND A REFRESHED GRILLE

EXTERIOR

THE MU-X is now more aggressive in its styling, with sharper lines, chiselled angles, redesigned bi-LED headlights and a refreshed grille. At the rear, a cleaner design is emphasised by the inclusion of wider tail-lights tied together by a full-width trim piece. The base-spec LS-M is the only variant not equipped with a hands-free electric tailgate.

The LS-M also carries over the same 17-inch alloys from the MY24 model, but the rest of the line-up has been equipped with refreshed wheel and tyre combos. The LS-U now wears 18-inch alloys with a 12-spoke design; and both the LS-T and X-Terrain get 20-inch alloys, the latter dialled up a notch courtesy of the as-mentioned gloss black finish and more aggressive angles.

INTERIOR

AN updated interior benefits from changes to the seats, which are now covered in a high-grade cloth (LS-M and LS-U models) or perforated leather (LS-T and X-Terrain). The X-Terrain distinguishes itself courtesy of red stitching throughout. At the launch, we spent the lion's share of our time in the X-Terrain, with these seats proving comfortable and supportive on long drives.

Isuzu has replaced the chrome trimmings on the dash and steering wheel with a satin/gloss black finish. This is positive, not solely for the aesthetic change, but because the chrome used previously had a knack for reflecting sunlight directly into one's eyeballs.

Technology has also been updated for 2025, with the LS-M getting the same 4.2-inch MID as per the revised D-MAX. Meanwhile, LS-U, LS-T and X-Terrain models are now equipped with the bigger 7.0-inch MID which adds extra features such as navigation and tyre pressure monitoring prompts.

The infotainment system – 8.0-inch for LS-M and 9.0-inch for LS-U, LS-T and X-Terrain – features wired and wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and from our brief experience it seems to respond a bit more briskly than the previous iteration. Tuning and volume dials have also been redesigned and are neatly integrated below the infotainment screen, making it easy to control those functions when on- and off-road. Isuzu has opted to include only USB-C ports in the centre console, so you'll have to run a cable up to the rear-vision mirror if you want to connect to a USB-A port.

With the third row of seats lowered, the MU-X has an ample 1119 litres of storage space available, making it an ideal choice for families who tend to chase remote campsites – put in a set of drawers, a fridge and a roof rack up top, and voila. Things do get a bit restricted with the third row of seats in use as you're left with just 311 litres of space, but it's still enough to store a few packs for a weekend away. With the second and third rows both flat, there's an impressive 2138 litres of space.

Head, shoulder and leg room for the driver and front passenger is liberal – 1020mm, 1460mm and 1075mm respectively. Plenty of leg room remains for the middle tier, at 915mm; with the third row limited to 850mm of leg room, which is rather tight for most adults but bearable for kids on longer trips.

Isuzu has installed up to 12 (yep, 12) bottle and cup holders, as well as plenty of storage bins and pockets, so there's no shortage of space to store maps, drink bottles, iPads and – like my family – countless wrappers, banana skins and used coffee cups.

ISUZU MU-X X-TERRAIN	
PRICE	$74,400
ENGINE	3.0L 4-cylinder turbo-diesel
CAPACITY	2999cc
MAX POWER	140kW at 1600 to 2600rpm
MAX TORQUE	450Nm at 3600rpm
TRANSMISSION	6-speed auto
4X4 SYSTEM	Part-time 4x4, rear diff lock
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	5-door wagon body on ladder-frame chassis
FRONT	Independent; coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live-axle, multi-link, coil springs
TYRES/WHEELS	265/50R20 HT on 20x7.5 alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2195kg
GVM	2800kg
GCM	5900kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	605kg
SEATS	7
FUEL TANK	80L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	8.3L/100km combined
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	N/A

SAFETY

ALREADY stamped with a five-star ANCAP safety rating back in 2022, the MU-X has advanced its suite of safety aids by adding a range of new features including a new Gen4 stereo camera, Intelligent Adaptive Cruise Control, Traffic Jam Assist, updated Lane Keep Assist, Rear Cross Traffic Brake, a Welcome Headlight, a Digital Reversing Camera, and the as-mentioned new 360-degree surround view monitor (LS-T and X-Terrain only).

VERDICT

WHILE it's inevitable and ultimately a good thing, the incoming NVES regulations could spell the end of Isuzu's 4JJ3. So if you want the reliability of the trusty 3.0-litre powerplant, now's the time to sign on the dotted line. The 1.9-litre is no slouch by any means, but we'd be opting for the bigger-displacement engine with our hard-earned.

The MU-X's on-road fallibilities – noticeable NVH, imperfect six-speed transmission and inconsistent lane-keeping assist – can easily be overlooked for its prowess in essentially all other areas: It is stacked with safety tech, it has voluminous storage capacity, it can comfortably transport large families to all corners of the map, it can sidetrack down difficult 4x4 trails, and it has plenty of potential for aftermarket modification. Plus, it remains well-priced.

The new MU-X should definitely be near the top of your shopping list if you're after a capable 4x seven-seat wagon.

Some of the viewing angles of the 2025 Isuzu MU-X's 360-Degree Surround View Camera.

For haulers the 2025 MU-X has a 3.5-tonne towing capacity.

Jayco
DISCOVERY
456·MA8

PROS	CONS
Off-road functionality	Price rise, but not by much
Scope for modification	Some on-road gripes
Gotta love the 4JJ3	No USB-A in centre console

NEW ISUZU
MU-X
SUV

The New 7-seat Isuzu MU-X SUV. With bold lines and performance to match, the New Isuzu MU-X is built for your next adventure.

ISUZU MU-X

ISUZU
MU-X

CANNONBALL

INTERIOR UPDATES AND A NEW DRIVELINE HEAD UP THE CHANGES TO THE 2025 GMW CANNON TO GOOD EFFECT

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS GWM

GREAT Wall Motors (GWM) has given its popular Cannon ute a significant midlife update paying particular attention to items that have previously attracted negative media and introducing a new, more powerful engine to the range.

GWM has dropped the 'Ute' nomenclature, figuring that most Australian buyers could tell what it is after looking at it, and the 2025 Cannon line-up now comprises four variants all priced at less than $50k +ORC, starting with the Lux at $40,490 and topping out with the XSR at $49,990.

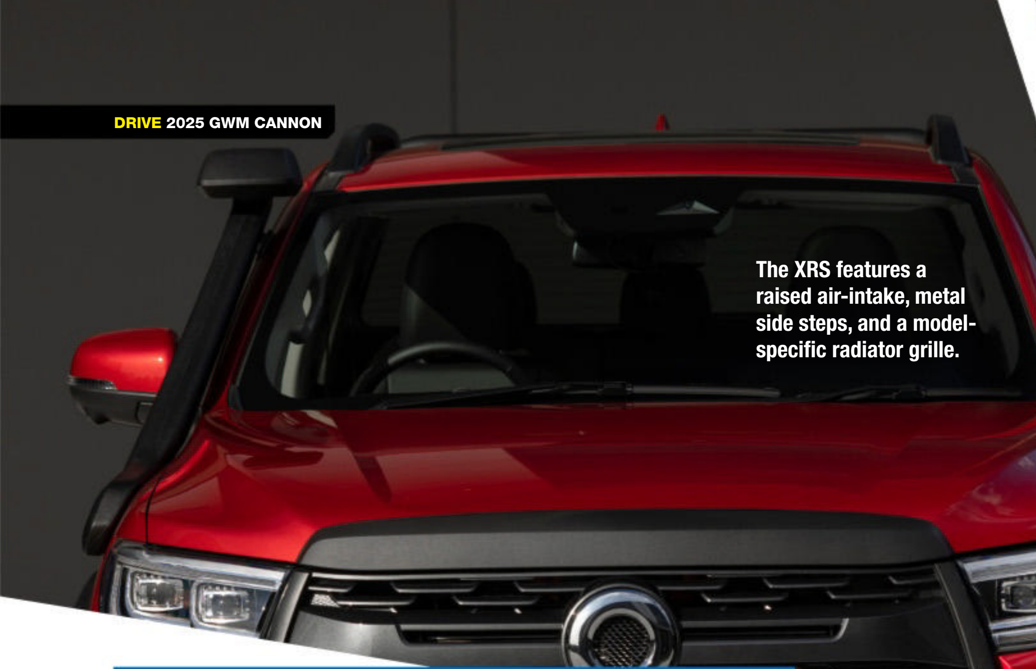
GWM has hinted that a Premium Cannon model will be coming as well but powered by the older 2.0-litre engine; exact timing on that model is yet to be confirmed.

All other 2025 Cannon variants receive the new 2.4-litre diesel engine that makes a claimed 135kW and 480Nm, which isn't class-leading but is ahead of some well-established nameplates in the midsize ute segment. The engine also promises improved fuel consumption with a combined cycle figure of 8.4L/100km versus the 9.4L/100km for the old mill.

The engine is backed by a nine-speed automatic transmission and an on-demand, dual-range 4x4 transfer case in all but the new XSR model, which retains part-time 4x4. A locking rear differential is standard in all grades while the XSR adds a front locker as well, making it the most off-road suitable model in the line-up.

This engine and transmission combination has been taken from the bigger Cannon Alpha model utes.

The entry-level Cannon Lux (GWM calls it a mid-spec even though there's no model below it yet) comes with faux leather seats and steering wheel, six-way manually adjustable driver's seat and

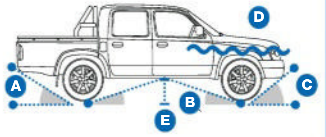


The XRS features a raised air-intake, metal side steps, and a model-specific radiator grille.

2025 Cannons receive the new 2.4L diesel engine that makes 135kW and 480Nm.

GWM CANNON LUX

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	25˚
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	N/A
C	APPROACH ANGLE	27˚
D	WADING DEPTH	700mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	232mm



four-way adjustment for the passenger (no seat height adjustment), single-zone climate control and a 60/40 split folding rear pew.

Safety-wise, a tyre pressure monitoring system heads up the kit along with seven airbags, rear parking sensors and camera, blind-spot monitor, collision mitigation (ESC, AEB, LKA, LDW, LCK, ELK, LCA), AEB junction assist, front collision warning incorporating pedestrian and cyclist detection, door open/vehicle approach warning, rear collision warning, rear cross-traffic alert with braking, and a driver monitoring system.

All Cannons now come with a new 12.3-inch high-resolution multimedia screen that includes phone mirroring apps and DAB. This new screen is placed up high in the dash and resolves most of the things that were so annoying in the previous system, however, it has moved all the switchgear into the screen where you have to find functions under menus. There are no simple buttons or dials on the dash for often used functions like audio volume and cabin temperature adjustment.

It's a stylish and well laid out dash but it still lacks functionality for simple features. The driver also gets a seven-inch information screen in the digital-gauge binnacle.

Stepping up to the Ultra grade over the Lux gets the buyer leather-accented seats that are heated and ventilated up front with six-way power adjustment for the driver and four-way for the front-seat passenger, a heated leather steering wheel, ambient cabin lighting, 18-inch alloy wheels, power sunroof, front parking sensors, a 360° camera, rear privacy glass and a fold-out step in the tailgate.

The step is a neat addition that mimics the one found in the Ford F-150 tailgate, however, it doesn't have the handle that the Ford has meaning there's no important third point of contact when climbing or descending the step.

Next step up the model range is the Vanta, which is essentially a styling pack giving black 18-inch alloys, sports bar, side steps, black grille, door handles and exterior mirrors.

The XSR adds the aforementioned front locking differential and part-time 4x4 system, terrain response with multiple drive modes, a raised air intake, metal side steps, body-coloured external mirrors and door handles, and a model-specific radiator grille.

The XRS's raised air intake gives it a quoted wading depth of 700mm, while the other models are all limited to just 500mm on water crossings.

More interesting is that the XSR loses some key safety tech including emergency lane keeping, smart dodge, door open/vehicle warning, rear collision warning, blind-spot detection, lane-change assist and rear cross-traffic alert.

GWM says that these features are not available on the XSR due to the hardware design but we reckon many drivers would be happy to live without them. The only feature you might miss

WHAT THE COURSE DID DEMONSTRATE VERY WELL IS THE CAPABILITY OF THE ON-DEMAND 4X4 SYSTEM COMBINED WITH THE ETC

All models now feature a new 12.3-inch high-resolution multimedia screen.

Faux leather seats with a six-way adjustable driver's seat.

is rear cross-traffic alert, while things like the annoying lane keeping assist you'd be pleased to be rid of.

As in previous Cannon and other GWM vehicles, some of its ADAS functions are overbearing and annoying and the lane keeping on the 2025 Cannon was a constant frustration on our test drive over sealed country roads. These systems can be disabled via the menus in the multimedia screen but they default to on every time the car is restarted.

Frustrating ADAS features aside, the 2025 Cannon represents a huge step up from the previous model. The new 2.4 engine not only delivers more grunt but it does so in a much smoother and more refined manner than the laggy 2.0-litre engine it replaces.

It matches well with the nine-speed transmission and the addition of shift paddles for the driver are most welcome for give and take driving conditions like the backroads we sampled the test vehicle on.

The ride and handling of the 2025 Cannon is another step up from the old model but there's still room for improvement. The steering lacks feel and the ride can be a bit harsh over rough roads; but the test vehicles were unladen and I reckon 500kg in the tray would help things out. The EPS (Electronic Power Steering) does have multiple settings for steering feel but they didn't seem to make a lot of difference on this drive.

Speaking of kilos, the Cannon's towing capacity has stepped up from 3200kg to the industry standard 3500kg, while payloads are up to 995kg in all models bar the XSR which is limited to 875kg due to its extra standard equipment.

The 2025 Cannon is slightly bigger than the old model but it's only in the bumpers and body cladding. The wheelbase, wheel track and interior dimensions remain the same and there's nothing wrong with that.

The off-road section of our test drive was over a set course that only required high-range even though it had

Tailgate boasts a fold-out step like in the Ford F-150.

a couple of short, steep climbs. What the course did demonstrate very well is the capability of the on-demand 4x4 system combined with the ETC, which made climbing over the obstacles easy without needing to change anything from the normal road driving settings.

Our drive was only in the Lux model as there was no XSR there for us to sample but, having driven the GWM Tank with its similar inclusion of front and rear locking diffs, we reckon it could be a weapon off road.

XSR aside, the improvements in the powertrain and the interior styling represent a huge step up in terms of performance and the look and feel inside the vehicle. It's not perfect, but what vehicle is? And when you consider the price of the Lux model we drove, it represents a lot of ute for the money. Add in GWM's seven-year, unlimited-kilometre warranty and five-year capped price servicing and roadside assistance, and the Cannon package looks even better; a clear indication of the rapid development that GWM is putting into its vehicles.

THE XRS'S RAISED AIR INTAKE GIVES IT A QUOTED WADING DEPTH OF 700MM WHILE THE OTHER MODELS ARE ALL LIMITED TO JUST 500MM ON WATER CROSSINGS

The GWN Cannon has a maximum tow rating of 3.5t.

GWM CANNON LUX	
PRICE	$40,990 +ORC
ENGINE	4-cyl diesel
CAPACITY	2370cc
MAX POWER	135kW at 3600rpm
MAX TORQUE	480Nm at 1500 to 2500rpm
TRANSMISSION	9-speed auto
4X4 SYSTEM	On demand, dual range
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	Double-cab ute body on ladder chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS w/ wishbones and coils
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle on leaf springs
TYRES	265/60R18 on alloy wheels
TARE WEIGHT	2173kg
GVM	3225kg
GCM	6200kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	995kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	78L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	8.4L/100km combined
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	N/a

TELL 'EM THE PRICE, SON	
CANNON LUX 2.4L DUAL CAB 4X4 AUTO	$40,490
CANNON ULTRA 2.4L DUAL CAB 4X4 AUTO	$43,490
CANNON VANTA 2.4L DUAL CAB 4X4 AUTO	$45,490
CANNON XSR 2.4L DUAL CAB 4X4 AUTO	$49,990

RAZR

MAXXIS

IF YOU'RE DRIVING AT THE **CUTTING EDGE...**

RAZR **MT772**
RAZR **AT811**

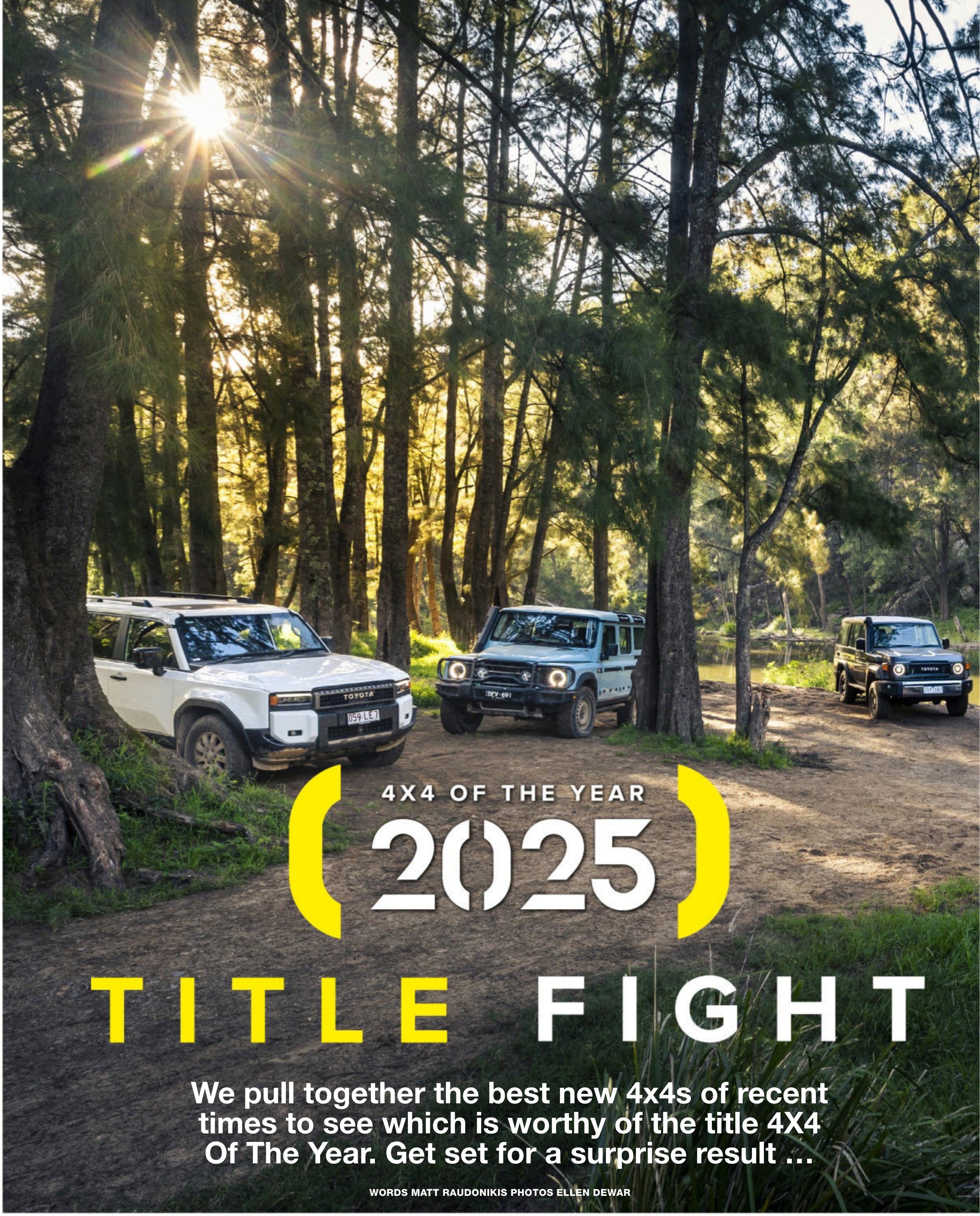
YOU'LL NEED A TYRE THAT'S **RAZR SHARP**

FIND OUT MORE:

MAXXISTYRES.COM.AU

MAXXISTyresAustralia @Maxxis.Tyres.Australia Maxxis Tyres Australia

TM240503_MAXXIS_4X4_AUSTRALIA_WHEELS_SP_02



4X4 OF THE YEAR 2025

TITLE FIGHT

We pull together the best new 4x4s of recent times to see which is worthy of the title 4X4 Of The Year. Get set for a surprise result …

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

MAXXIS TYRES

4X4 Of The Year is back

4X4 Australia Magazine's 4X4 Of The Year Award is the longest running and most acclaimed accolade for new off-road vehicles in the country spanning more than three decades of the best off-road vehicles to come to the market. Over that time the award has gone to the biggest marques in the industry including Land Rover, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Nissan, Jeep and Ford, with judging from some of the most respected and well-travelled writers in the industry.

4X4 Of The Year is back in 2025 and, as we have done in the past, we whittled down the field of eligible new vehicles based on our testing and reviewing all the possible contenders over the past few years. This allows us to select just six finalist vehicles to take part in a week of testing and evaluation where we score each vehicle against the established criteria to find a winner.

The five 4X4OTY criteria are:

VALUE FOR MONEY is judged according to a vehicle's equipment level, safety features and price relative to its direct competitors. Just because a vehicle has a high price doesn't mean it's not good value in the same way a cheap car doesn't always represent good bang for your buck.

BREAKING NEW GROUND refers to advancements in technology and design. How a vehicle has raised the bar in the class it fits in and taken 4x4s to a higher level. If a vehicle has the latest safety features, worthy engine technology or an advanced driveline, it will score well here.

BUILT TOUGH refers to how strong a vehicle is and how well it will cope with the rigours of tough off-road driving environments. Will it be up to the task of carrying loads and outback travel, or fall apart at the first hurdle?

BUSHABILITY is how well a vehicle is equipped for off-road travel. Suitability of the standard tyres for rough roads, touring range, available accessories and underbody protection are just some of the factors considered here. Is this a vehicle you would choose to drive around Australia the rough way, or is it best left to the suburbs?

DOING THE JOB is judged according to a vehicle's design brief. Does a luxury vehicle have all the latest in comfort and convenience features and do they work in the real world? How well a ute carries a load, or a seven-seater accommodates a family, will all come into play here.

At the end of a week of testing both on and off road, our team of testers score each of the vehicles against each of the five criteria to give each car a score out of 50. The car with the highest combined score wins, nothing else comes into the outcome.

Over the decades, the 4X4OTY award had been split over various price brackets as the prices of new vehicles continued to get higher, and also between 4x4 wagons and utes as the technology and features of each varied over time. For its 2025 return we've again split the field between wagons and utes, with the former making up this first test and the workhorses to be judged later in the year.

Let's take a look at the finalists for this test

With only six positions available among our wagon finalists, there had to be some worthy exclusions

FORD EVEREST SPORT

THE second generation (for Australia) Ford Everest has been with us for three years now but wasn't released the last time we did a 4X4OTY test. In those years the Everest has become the best-selling medium-size 4x4 wagon in Australia outselling the previously unchallenged Toyota Prado which, in its defence, was between models as the 150 Series ran out and the 250 Series came online.

But the Everest rides high on its merits delivering a solid and spacious family wagon with a choice of five- or seven-seat configurations, four-cylinder and V6 diesel engines, a capable chassis and drivetrain, and an easy to live with interior.

We chose the Everest Sport as our finalist for that sweet V6 engine and high level of comfort and features, while not breaking the bank on purchase price.

An interesting side note; when *4X4 Australia* gave the 4X4OTY award to the first-generation of Everest back in 2015, it was the first time that a Ford vehicle had ever taken the title.

GWM TANK 300

THIS is the first time we've had a vehicle from Great Wall Motors in 4X4OTY, and with the Tank 300 it's a well-deserved inclusion. The Tank 300 is a small wagon similar in size to the Jeep Cherokee so it fills a void in the market for buyers who don't want or need a bigger 4x4, but for whom a Suzuki Jimny wouldn't cut it.

As a smaller vehicle it's priced accordingly but doesn't miss out on features, while its front and rear lockers and relatively light weight make it an impressive rig in rough terrain. Our request for a Tank test vehicle came as GWM was introducing its new diesel-fuelled model of the 300, and it's this vehicle that we have on test here in Ultra specification

INEOS GRENADIER TRIALMASTER

IT'S not often that an all-new brand comes into the specialised 4x4 market, let alone one built on a traditional ladder-frame chassis with live axles and coil springs front and rear, and genuine off-road credentials. This made the Ineos Grenadier one of the most talked about new vehicles of 2024 and one that was on the shopping lists of many buyers.

Available in three model grades with the choice of petrol or diesel engines, we've gone with the Grenadier Trialmaster diesel as it is the best equipped model for off-road touring in Australia.

An as-tested price of $124,356 makes the Ineos the most expensive vehicle among our finalists; will the Grenadier have the firepower to live up to its price tag and high expectations?

MAXXIS TYRES

NISSAN PATROL WARRIOR

THE Nissan Patrol Y62 might be one of the oldest vehicles on our test but it's the one that consistently puts ear-to-ear smiles on the faces of our drivers. So why is it here? The Nissan Patrol Warrior is a new variant of the Y62 co-developed by private engineering firm Premcar to improve its overall off-road performance; and the results are a huge success.

With more ground clearance, improved suspension, taller all-terrain tyres, a host of styling and comfort upgrades, and a bi-modal exhaust system bellowing the sound of that sweet V8 engine out the side, the biggest wagon in our field was a favourite.

TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE

FROM the oldest vehicle in the field to the newest, the 250 Series Toyota Prado has been one of the most highly anticipated new models of the last couple of years, only arriving late in 2024. The 250 Series is almost all-new with the engine being the only major component carried over from the old model, and even that has changed with a 48V mild hybrid assistance system.

In the five-model 250 Series Prado range, the Altitude is the variant targeted the most at off-road touring with all-terrain tyres on 18-inch wheels, a rear locking differential and a disconnecting front sway bar all adding to its capabilities in the rough. Also important is that the Altitude only has five seats so the rear cargo area is left without the hugely compromised third-row seats taking up valuable space.

TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 76

WHILE we're talking about the age of vehicles, the 70 Series Toyota LandCruiser is certainly the elder statesman of the new-car fleet, marking 40 years in production last year. The model's ongoing evolution and improvements have kept the 70 Series current and it is one of the most rugged and off-road focused vehicles money can buy today.

A new driveline was fitted to the 70 Series range in 2024 with Toyota's venerable 1GD 2.8-litre turbo-diesel slotted into the engine bay and backed by an automatic transmission for the first time in decades.

We've got the GDJ76 GXL LandCruiser here on test; it's simple, basic and capable, but has it got what it takes to be our 4X4 Of The Year?

Who's missing from this year?

WITH only six positions available among our wagon finalists, there had to be some worthy exclusions. The toughest one to leave out was the Lexus GX550 Overtrail as it impressed us immensely when we drove it back in 2024. But with two other Toyota products already in the mix and one of them being the more popular Prado that is based on the same platform as the GX550, the Lexus narrowly misses out.

It's a similar story with the LandCruiser 300 Series which won the best wagon accolade the last time we did 4X4OTY. But when we compared the LC300 GR Sport with the Patrol Warrior in 2024 the Nissan came up trumps and so earned its place over the Cruiser.

GWM's Tank 500 is a midsize 4x4 wagon with a touch of luxe that you could say competes with the Lexus GX but at a lower price. It was on our reserve list but we felt the more rugged Tank 300 would better represent the GWM brand amongst the other 4X4OTY contenders.

The previous generation of Jeep's Grand Cherokee won 4X4OTY a few years back and a new generation of the model was launched since we last conducted the test. But the new Grand Cherokee has lost all the things that made the previous model so appealing and one of Jeep's best ever selling vehicles in Australia, so sadly ruled itself out this time around.

The Test

4X4 Australia is a title for off-road 4x4 vehicles, so our testing was never going to be on a racetrack or in shopping centre car parks. To test the contenders, we go touring just like our readers do; on and off road, sealed and gravel roads, high- and low-range driving, up hill and down dale.

Wanting to use some set tracks and obstacles, we started our testing at the Great Divide Tours (GDT) off-road training ground near Braidwood in NSW. GDT has been conducting 4x4 tagalongs and driver training for more than 30 years and its facility at Braidwood is specifically designed for four-wheel drivers ranging from complete amateurs to experienced drivers.

For us, the GDT facility provides tracks designed to test the tractive ability of a vehicle and we are able to repeatedly run each of our contenders over the same sections to see how they perform and compare. This is something that is very hard to replicate 'in the wild' on bush tracks, so having this access to the GDT facility is most valuable.

The Wombat Holes track sees vehicle wheels drop into deep holes across diagonally opposing wheels. The track is over a mild incline and gives a great indication of how well a vehicle's tractive systems perform, including electronic traction control and locking diffs where fitted. It also gives us an idea of any clearance issues that a vehicle might have on uneven ground.

The hillclimbs at GDT similarly put the tractive ability of a vehicle to the test with uneven and loose surfaces on hills of various lengths, gradients and conditions. Significantly, there are hills here that not all of the test vehicles will conquer using a specific line so it allows us to experience the ability of the vehicles time after time on the same challenging track.

From the Great Divide Tours facility, we set off for some 4x4 touring just like owners of these vehicles would do. The roads south of Braidwood gave us the chance to experience the vehicles on sealed and unsealed roads at both high

MAXXIS TYRES

Like the LandCruiser 70 Series, the Jeep Wrangler got a new turbocharged four-cylinder engine in 2024, but it wasn't enough to get the iconic model into this year's list of finalists.

Land Rover vehicles have been well represented among our 4X4OTY winners in the past and in recent years LR has made changes and refinements to its engines across the range, but there's been nothing significant since the new Defender arrived on the scene; we wait in earnest. Models like the Range Rover and Range Rover Sport, as great as they are, have become too luxurious and high priced to be serious 4X4OTY contenders.

Utes? Where are the utes and pickups? We'll be doing a specific 4X4 Ute Of The Year review in the latter part of the year.

We've split the six wagon finalists down the middle based on awarding best vehicle costing less than $80,000 and best costing more than $80,000.

and low speeds. As we headed into the forest and the roads turned to gravel, the bends got tighter and twistier, giving the vehicles a chance to display their dynamics, visibility and control.

On arrival at our camp at Dry Crossing, a walk of the river revealed the water level to be around 650mm to 700mm, so chatter in camp revolved around if we could get these showroom stock 4x4s across the river the following day, bearing in mind the rated fording levels for each of them.

A walk across the river the next morning showed that the water level had dropped overnight so the call was made to make the crossing. It was still heart in the mouth stuff as the water was as deep as you'd want to risk it with standard vehicles. Thankfully, they all made it across without drama.

The crossing dropped us on to the Merricumbene Fire Trail. This track across the Great Dividing Range covers close to 140km of steep climbs and descents in a classic High Country environment to the stunning Bendethera Valley. The view and flora change constantly as the altitude varies crossing the mountains and ridges, making this a remarkable 4x4 trek.

The variety of road surfaces and conditions also changes dramatically, again testing the tractive abilities of the vehicles and also the way they ride and handle on these classic bush tracks. The drivers swapped through the vehicles every hour or so allowing each to get a good feel for the six contenders.

The vehicles handled most of the tracks with relative ease until one particular climb had us rethinking our route. The convoy was travelling behind the tucker truck (a Y62 Patrol) and we watched on as it climbed a steep hill as light rain started to fall. Right at the highpoint of the climb the back of the heavily laden Nissan skipped sideways, but a heavy right boot ensured the Patrol just made it over the lip.

Following in the LC76 with the lockers engaged I took the same line but when the back jumped out the standard tyres clogged with mud and lost traction. This required a slow and careful reverse back to the base where I dropped more air out of the tyres and directed the other drivers still there to do the same, as the track was getting wetter and slipperier.

With lowered pressures and taking a different line the Cruiser crested the hill and was followed by the others; all but one vehicle making it. The Tank required a snatch-pull to get over the crest after several stalled attempts.

> "It was still heart in the mouth stuff as the water was as deep as you'd want to risk it with standard vehicles"
>
> **MATT RAUDONIKIS**

Ford Everest Sport

THE Ford Everest topped the Toyota Prado as Australia's best-selling midsize 4x4 in 2024 and rightly so as this second-generation model offers a comprehensive package as a family touring wagon. Admittedly, this was while Toyota was running out its stock of the old Prado but the Everest still has a lot to offer and deserves the sales title.

At $76,590 (+ORC) the Everest Sport V6 we had on test is cheaper than all but the lowest grade 250 Series Prado GX meaning that it should be able to remain competitive in the sales race with the new Toyota in 2025.

The Everest Sport is a premium offering with leather seats, large multimedia screen, full suite of safety functions and a dual-range transfer case with multiple drive modes and a locking differential in the rear axle.

Its biggest selling point is its V6 diesel engine which, while relatively heavy on fuel use, offers refined performance and ability that nothing else short of a much more expensive LC300 can beat. The engine might be long in the tooth but it gives the Everest a level of performance that few other vehicles in the segment can match, and significantly one of those is the 250 Series Prado.

The 4X4OTY testing showed many of the characteristics of the vehicles that we have noted during previous testing. Specifically for the Everest is that its ETC is slower to react than that in Toyotas which set the standard, and this allows the tyres to slip before traction control cuts in to arrest the slippage. As a result of this hesitation,

MAXXIS TYRES

“Less intimidating in size than others in its class, the Everest has everything that most people will aspire to”

RON MOON

> "Lacks a bit of suspension flex compared with this bunch, but in isolation it will take you wherever you want to go"

DAVE MORLEY

the Everest scrabbles for traction in areas where other vehicles get through smoothly, so it really needs its locking rear differential to make it through.

The Everest's off-road drive modes are also important here as we found that leaving it in the automatic setting or the wrong mode for the conditions has a negative effect on performance. This was evident when driving through the Wombat Holes where some drivers were making a meal of the sloppy conditions. Selecting the 'Mud/Ruts' drive mode certainly made a difference here as it sharpens up the ETC performance. Still, the RDL was needed for the best results.

The Everest also revealed itself to be the lowest vehicle among our contenders, bottoming out on occasion when negotiating obstacles.

It was a similar story on the hillclimb where some drivers couldn't get the Ford up the most challenging hill, but selecting the more aggressive drive mode and using a light throttle eventually got it up there.

An annoying feature on the Everest compared to some of the other 4x4 vehicles in the Ford range – all of which use a similar if not the same system – is having to select the off-road screen to activate the RDL while other Fords have it at the touch of a button.

The Everest's strong points are its well-equipped and generally functional cabin and its on-road performance. The seven-seat cabin delivers space for family travels and the third-row seats fold flat into the floor when not in use to make the most of the storage space.

The large vertical multimedia screen is easy to read and use, and retains manual controls for cabin temperature and volume control that are easy to use without taking your eyes off the road.

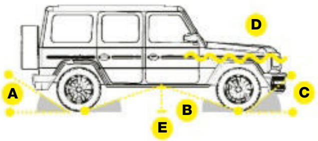
The on-demand 4x4 system gives the driver on-road 4x4 traction which is great when driving on gravel roads and over crook surfaces. The suspension is beautifully dialled in for Australian road conditions making the Everest an excellent touring wagon.

Dave Morley said of the Ford: "Lacks a bit of suspension flex compared with this bunch, but in isolation it will take you wherever you want to go."

Ron Moon added: "Less intimidating in size than others in its class, the Everest has everything that most people will aspire to."

FORD EVEREST SPORT

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	23°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	21.9°
C	APPROACH ANGLE	30.2°
D	WADING DEPTH	800mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	226mm



	FORD EVEREST SPORT
PRICE	$76,650 +ORC
ENGINE	V6 diesel
CAPACITY	2993cc
MAX POWER	184kW at 3750rpm
MAX TORQUE	600Nm at 1750 to 2250rpm
TRANSMISSION	10-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	2wd, 4x4 auto, 4x4 high range, 4x4 low range
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	Body-on-frame 5-door wagon
FRONT SUSPENSION	Double wishbone IFS
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, coil springs, multi-links, Watt's linkage
TYRES	265/60R18 on alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2492kg
GVM	3150kg
GCM	6250kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	685kg
SEATS	7
FUEL TANK	80L
ADR FUEL CONSUPTION	8.5L/100km
ON TEST FUEL CONSUPTION	16.7L/100km

Final
Score
134/200

GWM Tank 300

AS the lowest priced vehicle in our group of finalists, the Tank 300 Ultra promised a lot of bang for bucks … and it delivered in spades.

Capable compact 4x4s are few and far between these days and the GWM Tank is a welcome addition as it fills a void in the market. The 300 is available in two grades of specification with either a 2.0-litre turbo-petrol engine or the same engine with hybrid EV assistance.

Now GWM has also introduced a diesel option just in time for our 4X4OTY testing, adding the 2.4-litre turbo-diesel engine from the 2025 Cannon into the mix, and that's what we have here in Ultra trim. Great Wall's diesel engine makes a claimed 135kW of power and 480Nm of torque, and it's backed by a nine-speed automatic transmission.

In $51,990 Ultra trim, the Tank is well-equipped with leather accented power seats, a full list of ADAS and safety features, and a premium feel.

Despite being relatively compact in size, the Tank 300 Ultra features a traditional body-on-frame construction with an IFS front end with coils and a live-axle rear with coils, with lockers front and rear, and high- and low-range in the transfer case.

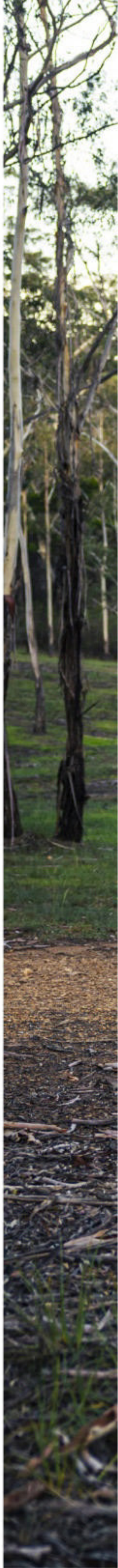
On test, the Tank 300 impressed our judges from the outset with its premium interior and the way it tackled the Wombat Holes track and hillclimbs at Great Divide Tours with relative ease.

MAXXIS TYRES

“The Tank surprised with its comfort and off-road ability”

RON MOON

Marlow
Durran Durra



> “The Tank offers a lot for relatively little, and while it absolutely shines off road (thanks to twin lockers and a fairly short wheelbase) and is decent on road, where it’s really let down by its engine which just doesn’t have enough poke”

DEX FULTON

4X4OTY judge Dex Fulton, who drove the Tank down to Braidwood for the start of testing, said afterwards: “The Tank offers a lot for relatively little, and while it absolutely shines off road (thanks to twin lockers and a fairly short wheelbase) and is decent on road, where it’s really let down by its engine which just doesn’t have enough poke.”

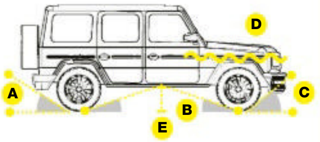
That lack of power was noted by a few of our drivers and came to the fore when the Tank failed to make it up that challenging hill on Merricumbene Fire Trail. As it climbed, the engine sounded as if it was being held back, not revving or accelerating enough to create the speed to clear the crest. Whether that was the traction control holding it back or the transmission not shifting when the engine redlined in low range is unknown, but the result was that the Tank was the only vehicle to need assistance during our test drive.

Nevertheless, Ron Moon reflected many of our sentiments about the vehicle saying: “The Tank surprised with its comfort and off-road ability.”

GWM TANK
2.4T
4WD

GWM TANK 300 DIESEL

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	21.3°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	23.3°
C APPROACH ANGLE	27.2°
D WADING DEPTH	500mm
E GROUND CLEARANCE	227mm



GWM TANK 300 DIESEL	
PRICE	$51,990 drive away
ENGINE	I4 diesel
CAPACITY	2370cc
MAX POWER	135kW at 3600rpm
MAX TORQUE	480Nm at 1500 to 2500rpm
TRANSMISSION	9-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	On-demand dual-range 4x4
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	5-door wagon on separate chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	Double wishbone IFS, coils
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, multi-links, coil springs
TYRES	265/60R18 on alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2313kg
GVM	2552kg
GCM	N/A
TOWING CAPACITY	3000kg
PAYLOAD	446kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	75L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	7.8L/100km combined
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	16.6L/100km

Final Score 136/200

Nissan Patrol Warrior

IF there was one vehicle in this group that really put a smile on the dial of the judges, it was the Nissan Patrol Warrior. Dave summed up the big Nissan saying: "Proof that evolution can sometimes trump novelty. Beautifully resolved in all the important areas, especially the driveline. Brilliant off road and super capable on the highway. Only the relative lack of tech lets it down a bit, but that's simply because the platform is so old. Huge value for money."

The comments on the Warrior were positive across the week of testing and it was surprising that it didn't score as well as expected. It is a capable and comfortable 4x4 wagon with proven credentials, the biggest and most comfortable interior by far, and a stonking V8 engine that will be sorely missed when the new Patrol arrives in 2026.

The Patrol might be getting on in age and is set for replacement at the end of 2025 but Nissan has done a stellar job by teaming up with Premcar to build a more focused and refined Patrol in the Warrior.

Premcar engineered a package that adds improved suspension, higher ground clearance, all-terrain tyres and a bi-modal exhaust system that lets the V8 roar when you put your foot to the floor. Combine these enhancements with interior trim upgrades in what is already a relatively luxurious cabin and the Warrior becomes a better mousetrap in all aspects of its design.

The Warrior made light work of the wombat holes and hillclimbs,

MAXXIS TYRES

> “Nissan has done a stellar job by teaming up with Premcar to build a more focused and refined Patrol in the Warrior”

MATT RAUDONIKIS

TRACK 3
TRACK 4

CPF·213
WARRIOR

> “Easily the comfiest touring vehicle on test. The tweaked suspension, despite being independent all-round, soaked up everything we threw it at and the power (and sound!) from the V8 would get an easy “bloody mongrel” out of Alf Stewart”

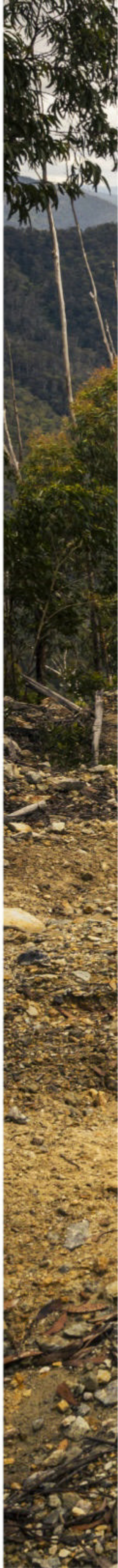
DEX FULTON

but showed its age in the time its ETC takes to engage compared to the newer wagons, instead using its reserves of grunt to get it up and over obstacles. The Patrol has a rear diff lock as standard, but add an aftermarket front locker to a Warrior and it would be virtually unstoppable.

The high levels of performance continue on the road where the Warrior is surefooted and stable on both sealed and gravel tracks. You sit high in the Patrol and it feels tall on its raised suspension and taller tyres, but never unsettled in any conditions. In fact, it feels ready for anything, any time.

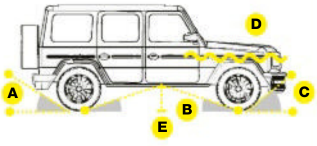
The age factor is again evident inside where despite Premcar’s efforts and a multimedia upgrade last year, the dash looks old and lacks some tech that new vehicles have standard, while the new multimedia system sits way too low in the centre stack. But the Patrol Warrior provided the most comfortable cabin among all the vehicles tested and it offered the most space for both passengers and cargo.

Dex said: “Easily the comfiest touring vehicle on test. The tweaked suspension, despite being independent all-round, soaked up everything we threw it at and the power (and sound!) from the V8 would get an easy “bloody mongrel” out of Alf Stewart.”



NISSAN PATROL WARRIOR

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	23.3°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	N/A
C	APPROACH ANGLE	40°
D	WADING DEPTH	N/A
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	323mm



	NISSAN PATROL WARRIOR
PRICE	$101,160 +ORC
ENGINE	V8 petrol
CAPACITY	5552cc
MAX POWER	298kW at 5800rpm
MAX TORQUE	560Nm at 4000rpm
TRANSMISSION	7-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	2WD, on-demand AWD and dual-range locked 4x4
CRAWL RATIO	43.96:1
CONSTRUCTION	5-door wagon on a separate chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS, coil springs and HBMC
REAR SUSPENSION	IRS, coil springs and HBMC
TYRES	295/70R18 on alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2884kg
GVM	3620kg
GCM	7000kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	736kg
SEATS	8
FUEL TANK	140L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	14.4:1 combined
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	16.3L/100km

Final Score 148/200

Ineos Grenadier Trialmaster

BFGoodrich
All-Terrain T/A

TO the group of four-wheel drivers that made up our judging panel, the Ineos Grenadier promised the most out of all our finalists. A practical body on a separate chassis with lockable live axles suspended by coil springs and driven by a powerful six-cylinder diesel engine – it reads like a wishlist for any off-road enthusiast or person working in remote terrain.

The Grenadier is also the only true, all-new vehicle here, coming from a new brand to the automotive world and starting from a clean sheet of paper – or pub napkin, as the story goes. Yet for something starting from a clean sheet design, the Grenadier has too many compromises from being instigated as an alternative for the old Land Rover Defender Classic.

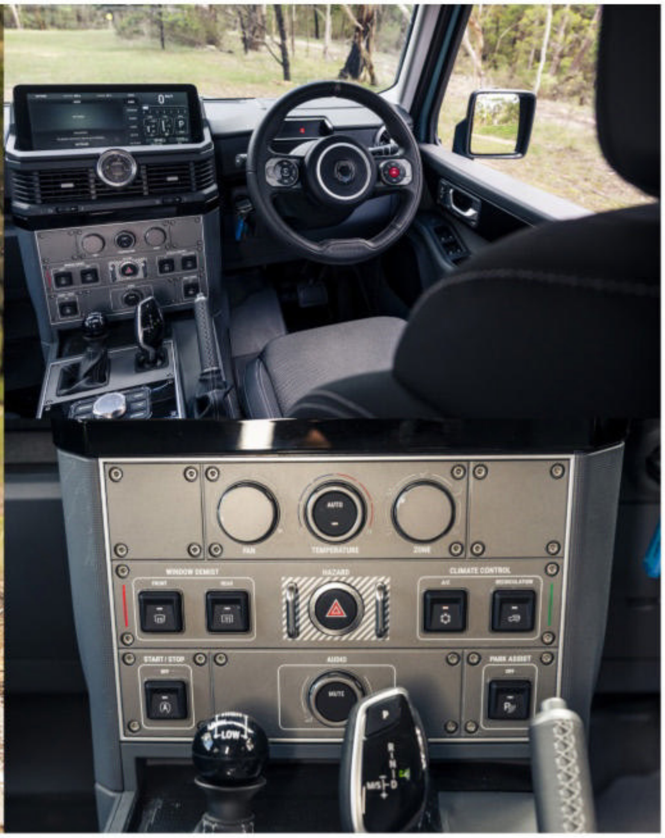
There were no complaints about the chassis and driveline in the Grenadier with the BMW-sourced inline-six diesel punching out plenty of grunt through a clever ZF transmission and triple locking differentials. It's a mechanical package that feels bulletproof and ready to take on any terrain and conditions. As such it made light work of the obstacles and hillclimbs at the Great Divide Tours facility. Even with just the centre diff locked the Grenadier easily conquered most of the terrain, and any time it became more challenging it was only a matter of locking the rear and/or the front diff to get the job done.

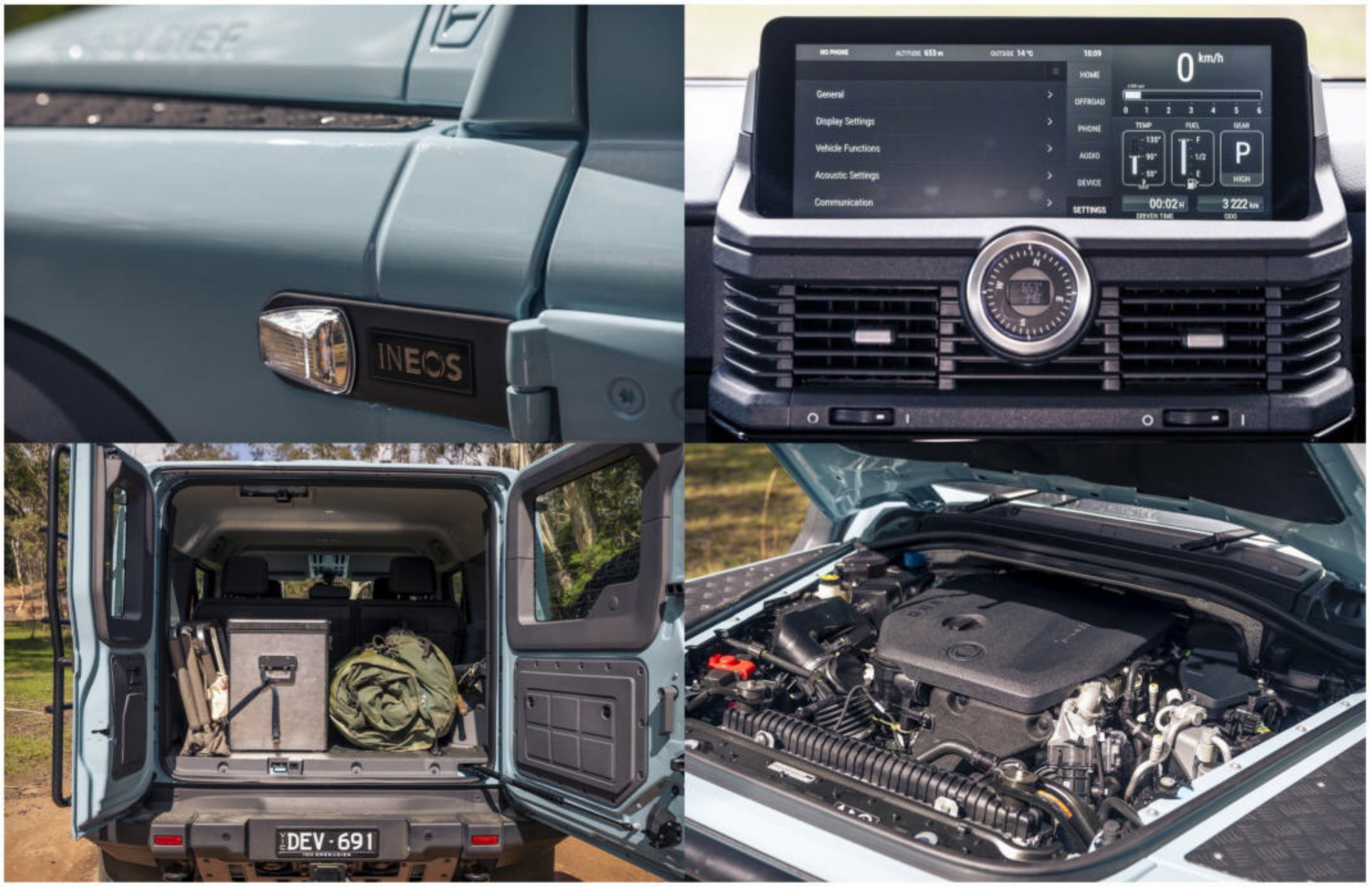
But this is where the Grenadier became challenging for our drivers; the interior of the Ineos is a cramped and busy place in which to operate. The buttons for the lockers are placed up on the roof console along with the switches

MAXXIS TYRES

> “Gorgeous driveline and absolutely fit for purpose, but I have doubts about how the front end is set up to be both slow steering yet still twitchy at speed”

DAVE MORLEY


FAN
AUTO
TEMPERATURE
ZONE
WINDOW DEMIST
HAZARD
CLIMATE CONTROL
START / STOP
AUDIO
MUTE
PARK ASSIST
LOW



> “The fact that the Grenadier was the only vehicle on test with a dual-battery system meant that it carried a fridge in the back for us”
>
> **MATT RAUDONIKIS**

for auxiliary equipment and off-road mode. The buttons do have little metal loops next to them, and I’m sure that eventually, after enough use, you’ll be able to find them by feel without having to look up for them, but it really shouldn’t be that difficult.

Plenty of vehicle manufacturers tell us that ‘you will get used to it with time’, but we shouldn’t have to, especially on a new vehicle that has been designed from scratch, as is the case with the Ineos Grenadier.

There are many niggly little things that make driving the Grenadier more of a chore than it should be, as much as we wanted it to be simple and easy.

As well as the built-for-purpose driveline and chassis, there are plenty of little things to like about the Grenadier; the standard fitment front and rear lockers, the Trialmaster spec’s dual-battery system under the back seat, the prewired roof for accessories like auxiliary lighting, the nifty mounts down the sides of the vehicle for attaching/securing accessories, and the prewired auxiliary switches are all useful additions to any off-road going 4x4.

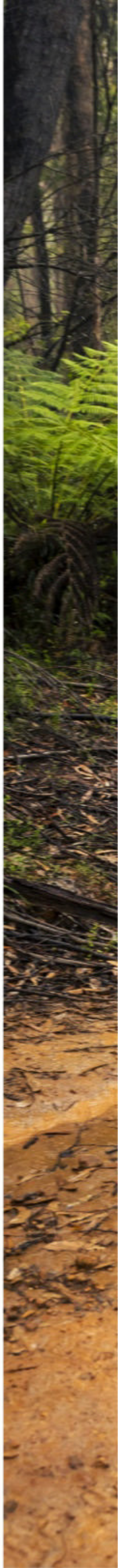
The fact that the Grenadier was the only vehicle on test with a dual-battery system meant that it carried a fridge in the back for us, and it was able to be secured there using the standard tie-down points.

Dex noted: “A great idea has lost something between being drawn on the back of a bar napkin and making it into reality. The driver’s seating position is awkward; the switchgear takes some (a lot of) getting used to; the ride is agricultural compared to the others here.”

While great off road and on gravel tracks, the Grenadier’s on-road manners aren’t perfect and, while you might point to its live axles as a reason for this, the LandCruiser 76 doesn’t suffer from such ill road manners. The odd feeling of the Grenadier’s front end has been noted by many testers, not just us.

Dave said of the Grenadier: “Gorgeous driveline and absolutely fit for purpose, but I have doubts about how the front end is set up to be both slow steering yet still twitchy at speed.”

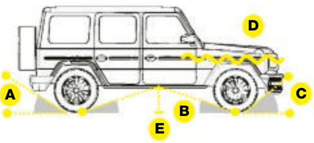
Ineos is obviously on to something with its Grenadier vehicles which are a welcome addition to a market in which 4x4s are generally getting softer, but there’s room for improvement and we’re sure that will come with time. For a first-time effort from an all-new automotive brand, the Grenadier is an impressive vehicle and we look forward to seeing future refinements.



MAXXIS TYRES

INEOS GRENADIER TRIALMASTER

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	36.1˚
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	28.2˚
C	APPROACH ANGLE	36.2˚
D	WADING DEPTH	800mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	264mm



INEOS GRENADIER TRIALMASTER	
PRICE	$123,000 +ORC
ENGINE	I6 diesel
CAPACITY	2993cc
MAX POWER	183kW at 3250 to 4200rpm
MAX TORQUE	550Nm at 1250 to 3000rpm
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Full-time 4x4 and dual-range locked 4x4
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	5-door wagon on separate chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	Live axle, coil springs, 5 links
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, coil springs, 5 links
TYRES	265/70R17 AT
KERB WEIGHT	2718kg
GVM	3550kg
GCM	7000kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	833kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	90L
ADR FUEL CONSUPTION	10.5LL/100km
ON TEST FUEL CONSUPTION	17.5L/100km

Final
Score
146/200

Toyota Prado Altitude

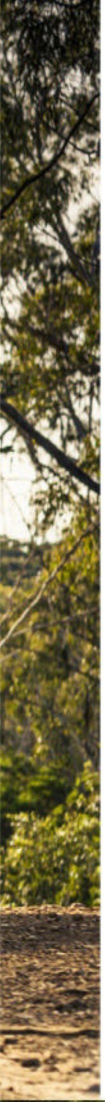
THE most highly anticipated new 4x4 launch of 2024 was definitely the Toyota Prado 250 Series. A long-time favourite wagon of families and off-road adventurers, the Prado has been a best-selling midsize wagon for decades. Thankfully, the new model isn't a let down.

The 250 Series sees the Prado grow in size, stature and price, but it comes to a market hungry for just such a vehicle. The Altitude model grade was best suited to our drive thanks to its all-terrain tyres on 18-inch wheels, rear differential lock and disconnecting front sway bar, but we also chose it as it is one of only two variants in the range to be offered with just five seats, as the third-row seating on models thus equipped impinges on cargo space more than we would want in a touring 4x4 wagon. We would have also considered the entry-level Prado GX for this test as it's also a five-seater, and it's the most affordable model in the range making it better value for money.

The new Prado continues to be the benchmark for midsize touring 4x4 wagons. It might be bigger than before but it still falls into that midsize bracket along with the Ford Everest and Isuzu MU-X, and being the newest vehicle to market it has plenty to offer the family traveller.

The bigger cabin of the 250 means there's plenty of room inside for adults and passengers, and the dash is well laid out and easy to use without missing out on any features. Inside you'll find a 12.3-inch multimedia screen that is compatible with wireless

MAXXIS TYRES



“The absolute all-rounder of this lot. Great in the bush and safe, comfy and techy enough to be a daily driver”

DAVE MORLEY

Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, Bluetooth connectivity and cloud-based inbuilt satnav; a panoramic moon roof; leather-accented seat trim with eight-way power adjustment, power lumbar support memory for the driver; and four-way power adjustment for the passenger seat. There's a 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster which only comes in the high-spec grades, as does the refrigerated console, the power-adjustable steering column and the JBL sound system kicking out the jams through 14 speakers.

The Prado had the most comfortable, best laid out and equipped cabin of all the vehicles tested, whether you were driving on the road or off it.

Along with the rear locker, disconnecting front sway bar and dual-range transfer case, the Altitude comes with multi-terrain selector with modes for rock, sand, snow, etc, as well as Crawl Control, which does an incredible job of maintaining steady progress over and up obstacles and tricky tracks without any application of the throttle by the driver. Crawl Control does this for you while distributing drive to the wheels with the most traction, making easy work of rough tracks; it really is one technology that even old school four-wheel drivers will appreciate.

The Prado's 2.8-litre turbo-diesel engine makes a claimed 500Nm and it provides plenty of power for highway and off-road driving, but performance is best described as adequate rather than scintillating. The new eight-speed automatic transmission is quick to kick down and respond to a floored throttle, and the engine pulls well with that familiar four-pot diesel rumble. It doesn't offer the performance or the refinement of Everest's V6 but the 2.8 gets the job done.

The 48V mild hybrid system that is now part of the drivetrain does very little from a driver's point of view other than display a range of lights and graphs on the dash. More significant are the restrictions it places on the rear cargo space and the ability to fit an auxiliary fuel tank under the back. Thankfully the Prado still carries 110 litres of good ol' diesel in its single tank.

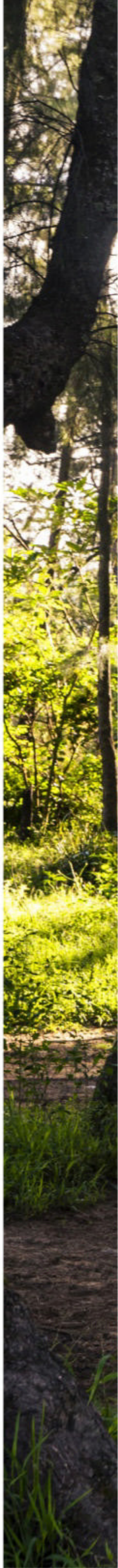
Whether you use the Prado for running around town or touring our wide brown land, the 250 Series is a very well executed 4x4 wagon that will tick all the boxes for many Australians. The compromises brought on by the packaging of the 48V system are the major blemish on its otherwise excellent design, but one we're already seeing work-arounds for from the aftermarket. Whether or not all the upgrades to the 250 Series will be enough to justify the higher prices across the Prado range will be up to the buyer's budget.

After driving the Prado Altitude, Ronny said: "Refinement, performance and comfort at a new level on road with impressive off-road capability."

Dex sang its praises as well, saying: "I would not hesitate to hop in this thing and drive straight to the Cape and it's equally at home on daily or towing duties. It seems to be a love it or hate it car, and I'm in the former camp. Fight me!"

Dave piped in with: "The absolute all-rounder of this lot. Great in the bush and safe, comfy and techy enough to be a daily driver. An excellent highway car, too. The Prado has finally earned the LandCruiser badge. A bit exy, though."

The Prado Altitude scored 156/200 making it the highest scorer of the $80K and up category.

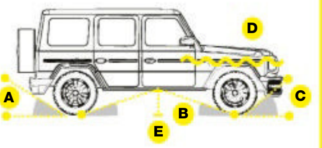


MAXXIS TYRES

	TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE
PRICE	$99,990 +ORC
ENGINE	I4 diesel
CAPACITY	2755cc
MAX POWER	150kW at 3000 to 3400rpm
MAX TORQUE	500Nm at 1600 to 2800rpm
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Full-time, dual range
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	5-door wagon on separate chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	IFS, wishbones, coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, coil springs multi-link, Panhard rod
TYRES	265/65R18 on alloy wheels
KERB WEIGHT	2595kg
GVM	3200kg
GCM	6600kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	605kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	110L (17.4L AdBlue)
ADR FUEL CONSUPTION	7.6L/100km
ON TEST FUEL CONSUPTION	15.9L/100km

TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE

A DEPARTURE ANGLE	17°
B RAMPOVER ANGLE	25°
C APPROACH ANGLE	32°
D WADING DEPTH	700mm
E GROUND CLEARANCE	221mm



Final Score 156/200

Toyota LandCruiser GXL GDJ76

WHILE we mentioned the evolution of the Patrol Warrior over several years, in the case of the LandCruiser 70 Series that applies seven fold. The 70 Series has been evolving for 40 years and the changes made to the range in 2024 were wholesale.

The latest evolution is centered around adapting the 1GD-FTV 2.8 engine to the 70 to keep the well-aged model in line with emissions regulations that the diesel V8 simply wouldn't be able to meet. The changes also introduced an automatic transmission to the range for the first time in decades. And the thing is, the four-cylinder engine and the auto transmission make the 70 better to drive than the V8 ever was in standard form.

The 2.8 engine is the same one found in the Prado 250 Series, the HiLux and the Fortuner … sans any hybrid interference. The auto slushbox is a six-speed Aisin unit that is well-matched to the 2.8 engine.

The new powertrain also heralded a fresh front-end design for the 70, and a smattering of new features, but it was really all about the engine and gearbox.

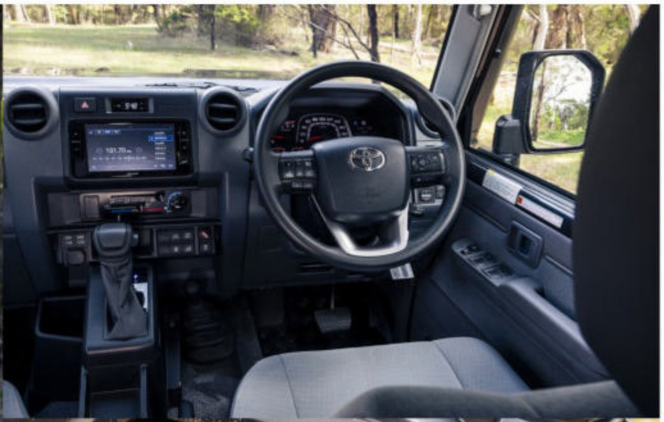
The LC76 wagon tested here in GXL trim was chosen for its front and rear locking diffs, power windows and cloth trim. As ever, the 76 remains a basic, no frills workhorse that gets on with the job, and that job is now easier for more people thanks to the new driveline.

Aside from the 1GD/auto powertrain and new tech under the skin, the only other changes are cosmetic. Toyota has doubled-down on the retro look with the revised front end reverting back to round headlamps, albeit now with LED DRLs, a taller bonnet over a revised grille and lower venting that replicates the earliest 70s, and an upper vent atop the grille that is very

MAXXIS TYRES

“What a difference a new – well new to the 70 Series – engine and a gearbox makes to this venerable workhorse”

RON MOON



LANDCRUISER

reminiscent of the 40 Series.

Inside, there's a new gauge binnacle that has a retro 40 Series vibe, but includes a 4.2-inch info display with digital speedo, a new 6.7-inch infotainment screen, and a new steering wheel with more control buttons than before.

Air-con and cruise control are standard as are front and rear differential locks on GXL models (optional on lower grades).

The 70 Series scores a bit of safety tech as well, but nothing like what you will find on all-new vehicles like the Prado and Everest. On the 70, Toyota's Safety Sense system includes a pre-collision system with day and night pedestrian and daytime cyclist detection, lane-departure alert with steering assist that works on the brakes and not directly on the Cruiser's hydraulic power steering, speed-sign recognition, auto high-beam lights, ABS, electronic stability and traction control, driver and front passenger airbags (but none for rear-seat passengers), downhill assist control on auto models only, and a reversing camera (only the four-cylinder/auto 76 wagon).

The LandCruiser 70 Series remains a very agricultural vehicle and its 40-year-old architecture means that integrating the latest safety systems is a huge challenge for the engineers, but many 4x4 tourers will appreciate the lack of interfering safety tech. Having said that, the 76 does give you the occasional chime to warn you to keep in your lane, but that's about it.

Evolving a vehicle over 40 years has allowed Toyota to get it right, and it has kept it simple with the 70 Series. The dash might hold a new gauge screen but the infotainment (if you could call it that) screen is very basic. There's no mapping, the image from the reversing camera is below average and the sound system is simply woeful.

While short of luxury and convenience features, the 70 Series makes up for it with purpose-built functionality and capability. In a world of new 4x4s that try to be all things to all people, the 70 sticks to its roots and focuses on capability you can depend on, no matter what the conditions or terrain.

With unrivalled ground clearance and locking diffs just a simple twist of a dial away, the 76 is near on unstoppable in the bush. Visibility out of the 40-year old cabin is fantastic and the relatively small dimensions of the wagon make it easy to get around in the scrub and in the shopping centre car park. It takes a day or two of familiarity before you get used to how manoeuvrable it is.

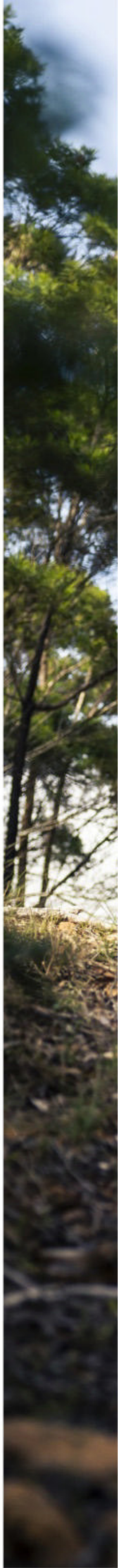
The cargo space is simply a square box with few protrusions to limit your load. The back seat folds forward or is easy to remove totally to make the most of that cargo space. Functionality at its best!

It's this level of functionality and off-road capabilty that allowed the LC76 to score so well with our team of drivers. 4X4OTY is judged by a team of four-wheel drivers, not soccer mums, and we're sure the result would have been different if it were, but we make no excuses for that. We are *4X4 Australia*, after all.

Ron Moon loved the 76 saying: "What a difference a new – well new to the 70 Series – engine and a gearbox makes to this venerable workhorse … and in the wagon it works exceptionally well."

Both Dex and Matt said this is the vehicle they would buy from the group, with Dex adding: "The auto is what the 70s have been missing since day one. It makes an already capable tourer into an easy daily driver and family wagon. I didn't love or hate the 2.8L; the diff locks make hardcore tracks a possibility."

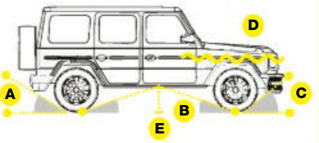
Dave wrapped it up saying: "Old school for sure, but still a relevant vehicle. The new driveline is a belter and probably shouldn't be as good as it is. The vastly improved fuel consumption and offer of an automatic gearbox also makes the live axles and prehistoric cabin design somehow less problematic. Brilliant in the scrub!"



MAXXIS TYRES

TOYOTA LAND CRUISER GXL GDJ76

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	23°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	N/A
C	APPROACH ANGLE	33°
D	WADING DEPTH	N/A
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	290mm



TOYOTA LAND CRUISER GXL GDJ76	
PRICE	$79,800 +ORC
ENGINE	I4 diesel
CAPACITY	2755cc
MAX POWER	150kW at 3000 to 3400rpm
MAX TORQUE	500Nm at 1600 to 2800rpm
TRANSMISSION	6-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Part-time, dual range
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	5 door wagon on separate chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	Live axle, radius arms, coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, leaf springs
TYRES	265/70RR16 on alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2300kg
GVM	3510kg
GCM	N/A
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	1210kg
SEATS	5
FUEL TANK	130L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	9.6L/100km combined
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	15.1L/100km

Final
Score
156/200

Summary

WE hear the haters bellowing already about the tied finish between two Toyota 4x4s, but there's a reason they both did so well. Toyota sells more 4x4s in the world than any manufacturer and it's been doing it for 70 years. Over that time it has continued to develop and evolve its vehicles and create variants to suit the differing needs of different end-users.

This is reflected in the two vehicles that share the 2025 4X4 Of The Year title: One a commercial vehicle that is utilitarian, built-for-purpose and no-frills; the other an almost all-new wagon with all the latest safety, comfort and convenience features … and even a nod to electrification for what that's worth.

While the Prado's strengths lie in its family-friendliness, versatility and all-round performance, the LandCruiser 70 shines for its unrivalled ruggedness, off-road capability, relatively low price and adaptability. And any LC70 variant is a blank canvas for the owner to accessorise to their own wants and requirements.

These two Toyotas are equally amazing and relevant 4x4s with differing focus points, yet they are able to achieve similar results. They are well-deserved joint winners.

NISSAN PATROL WARRIOR
148/200

TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE
156/200

INEOS GRENADIER TRIALMASTER
146/200

MAXXIS TYRES

GWM TANK 300 DIESEL

136/200

TOYOTA LAND CRUISER GXL GDJ76

156/200

FORD EVEREST SPORT

134/200

Deserving joint winners

A PAIR of five-seat 4x4 wagons from Toyota, both nade to do a similar job but each doing it a different way.

The new 250 Series Prado uses all the latest tech for safety and creature comfots, but also for off-road ability making it a sublime family tourer.

The LandCruiser on the other hand, is old school and brutal in its delivery, and you just know its going to take on everything you can throw at it without raising a sweat.

TOYOTA PRADO ALTITUDE

156/200

> "The Prado had the most comfortable, best laid-out and equipped cabin of all the vehicles tested, whether you were driving on the road or off it"

MATT RAUDONIKIS

MAXXIS TYRES

TOYOTA LAND CRUISER GXL GDJ76

156/200

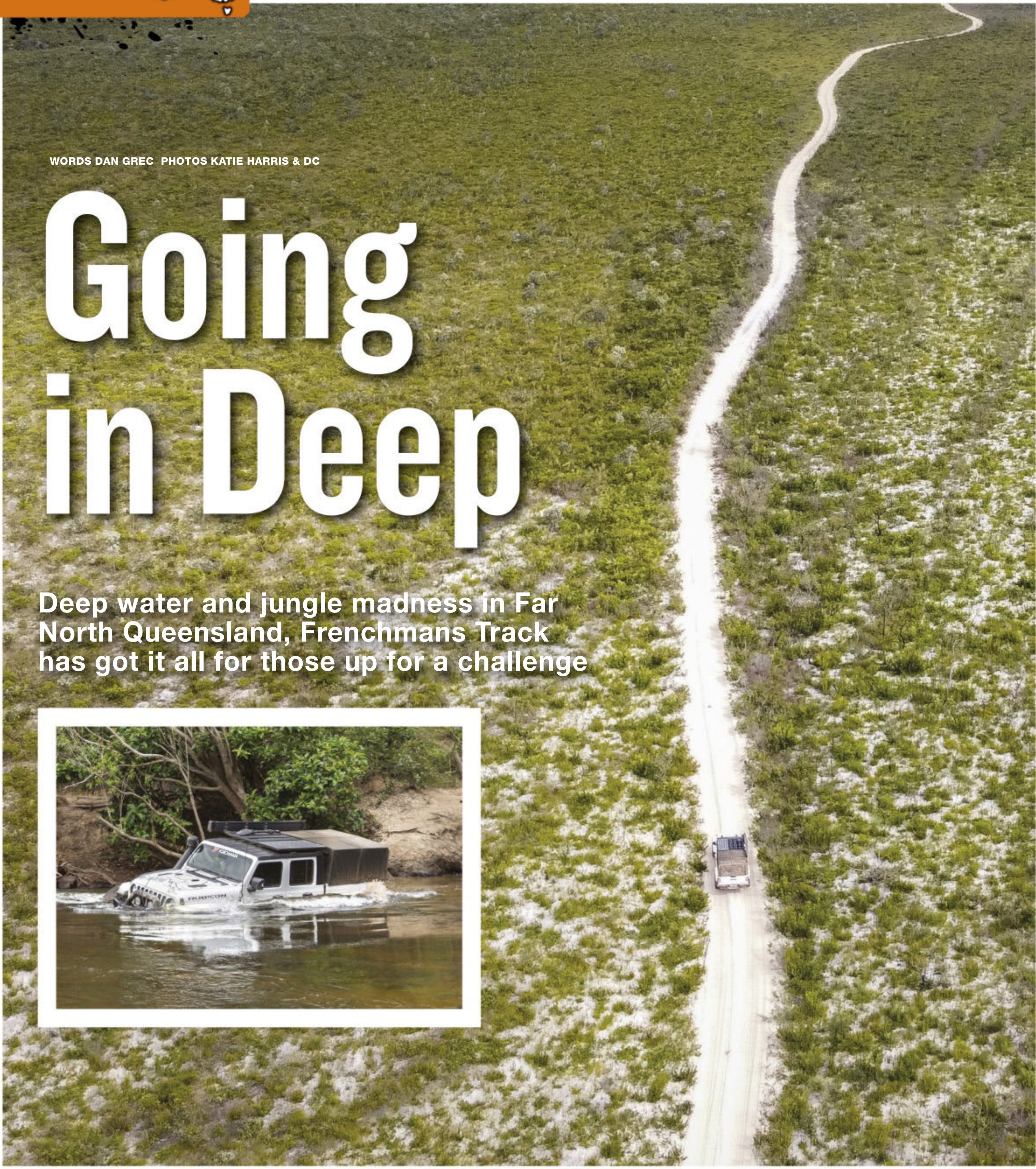
> “Old school for sure, but still a relevant vehicle. The new driveline is a belter and probably shouldn’t be as good as it is”

DAVE MORLEY

WORDS DAN GREC PHOTOS KATIE HARRIS & DC

Going in Deep

Deep water and jungle madness in Far North Queensland, Frenchmans Track has got it all for those up for a challenge



WE'VE been agonising over the decision for the better part of two hours, and I can procrastinate no longer. Brad, Josh and myself have half walked, half swum the Pascoe River, crossing more times than I can count, and it's finally my time to bring the Gladiator across the sizeable flow of water.

As I inch down into the current while simultaneously spooling in the winch line, I run through the list of reasons why I really don't like this crossing. Firstly, it's deep. Wading across proved the main channel to be up to my belly button, and when I stepped in the occasional hole it quickly nudged my armpits. Comparing this to the bonnet height of the Gladiator, I fully expect to rely on my snorkel for this one.

Secondly, the riverbed is littered with large boulders, making the bottom extremely uneven and unpredictable. Though we have tried our best to scout the best line through the boulders, and even moved a few around, the sunlight and the fast flow make it very difficult to see through the water from the driver's seat. Any of the larger boulders could easily hang up a diff or lower control arm, stranding me in the deep water.

Thirdly, the river is *really* flowing. This is by far our biggest concern, and we are all worried about the possibility of the water pushing us downstream, over a row of boulders and into much deeper water. We're hoping to avoid this at all costs, and I keep the winch line so tight it actually moves the Jeep. I'm really hoping the tension on the line will at least keep the nose of the Jeep pointed in the right direction.

Finally, there might be crocodiles in this river. I don't just mean little freshies, either, I mean their much larger and toothier salty cousins. It's insane that this is the last reason I don't like this crossing, but that is an honest review of the situation. The depth, boulders and flow are more concerning at this point in time than man-eating crocodiles.

I inch forward over a few more boulders and can hear nothing other than sloshing water as it slowly begins to flow up and over the front of the bonnet.

THE FRENCHMANS TRACK

PUSHED through the jungle and scrubland, Frenchmans Track was probably built in the ’60s to access the Iron Mountain Range during a rush of gold mining exploration. To this day Frenchmans remains as one of the more challenging four-wheel drive tracks in Far North Queensland, only a stone’s throw from the northern tip of the Australian continent. Traversing the entire track involves crossing two major rivers, the Pascoe and the Wenlock, which change in depth and flow dramatically over the seasons. Even during our visit in the ‘dry’, when it isn’t supposed to rain much, the depth of the river can change by several feet in a matter of hours.

Only the most well-equipped vehicles tackle Frenchmans, and it would be foolish to attempt this one solo. With safety and vehicle recovery in mind, we team up with Josh and Georgie in their Troopy and Brad and Kristy in their very flexy GU Patrol ute. We last tackled the CREB Track together, where Josh demonstrated he has no fear of monster wheel lifts, and Brad demonstrated his love of using his right foot. No matter what happens on this one, I am certain it won’t be boring.

We rendezvous at stunning Chilli Beach in Iron Range National Park, one of Australia’s most isolated and northerly beaches. At only 12-and-a-half degrees latitude south, we’re so close to the equator that this part of Australia looks like a tropical paradise, complete with white sand, turquoise ocean and an abundance of palm trees laden with wild coconuts. Unfortunately, at these tropical latitudes we also have to contend with the local inhabitants: monster saltwater crocodiles and deadly jellyfish. It’s a sad irony that the more tropical and stunning northern Australia becomes, the more deadly the water is. Though the air and water are both at perfect bath temperature, the water is absolutely off limits, and we all stay well clear to give the salties a wide berth.

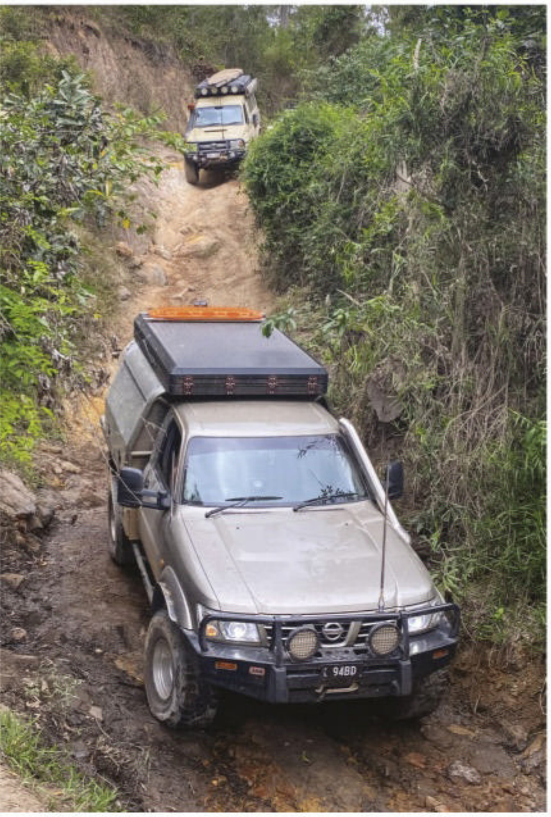
On a happier note, after a short walk along the white sand I have a handful of perfectly ripe coconuts, and with the help of a metal stake I husk them in a few minutes each. Soon we have a heaping pile, and we take turns drinking the delicious milk. And while the milk is delicious, I have always loved the firm white flesh, and soon I have an enormous zip-lock bag stuffed full. Keeping it in the fridge provides the perfect road snack during these hot and sticky days, and I stash plenty more husked nuts in the back for good measure.

In the late afternoon the wind whips up a fury, so we move back into the shelter of the tropical jungle to camp, and right at dusk Georgie spots a family of cassowaries scratching around in search of dinner, complete with a fuzzy little black and white chick. It is extremely rare to spot cassowaries in the wild, especially with chicks.

CHILLI BEACH

CHILLI BEACH

We rendezvous at stunning Chilli Beach in Iron Range National Park, one of Australia's most isolated and northerly beaches



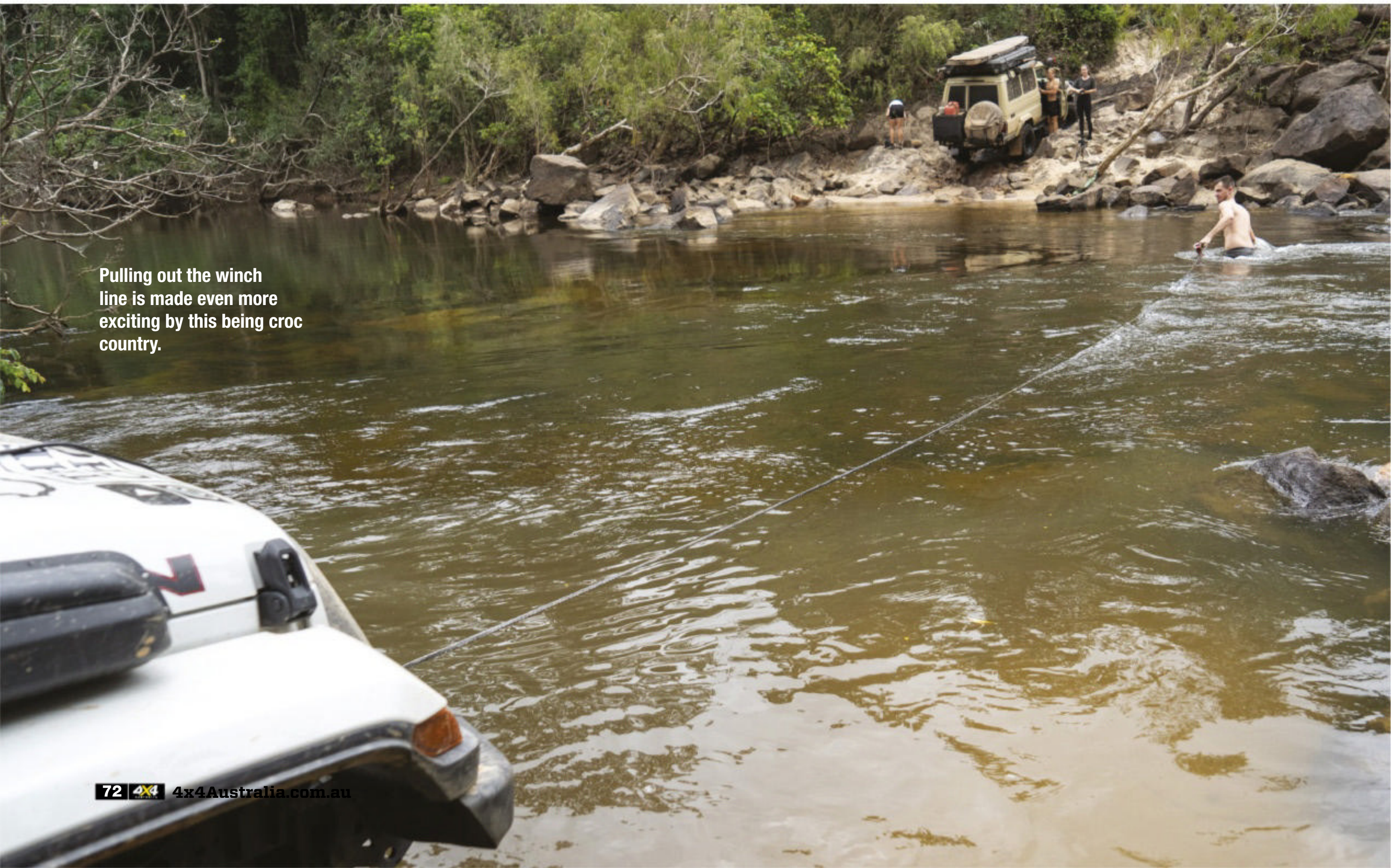
ON THE TRAIL

AFTER airing down and a quick team meeting, we make good progress for the first couple of hours through large wombat holes and deeply rutted sections of track. On the straighter sections the track is badly corrugated, forcing us to keep the speed down. The jungle gives way to dry and dusty scrubland with commanding views over the Iron Range mountains. As we move deeper into the track we begin to encounter enormous grey termite mounds.

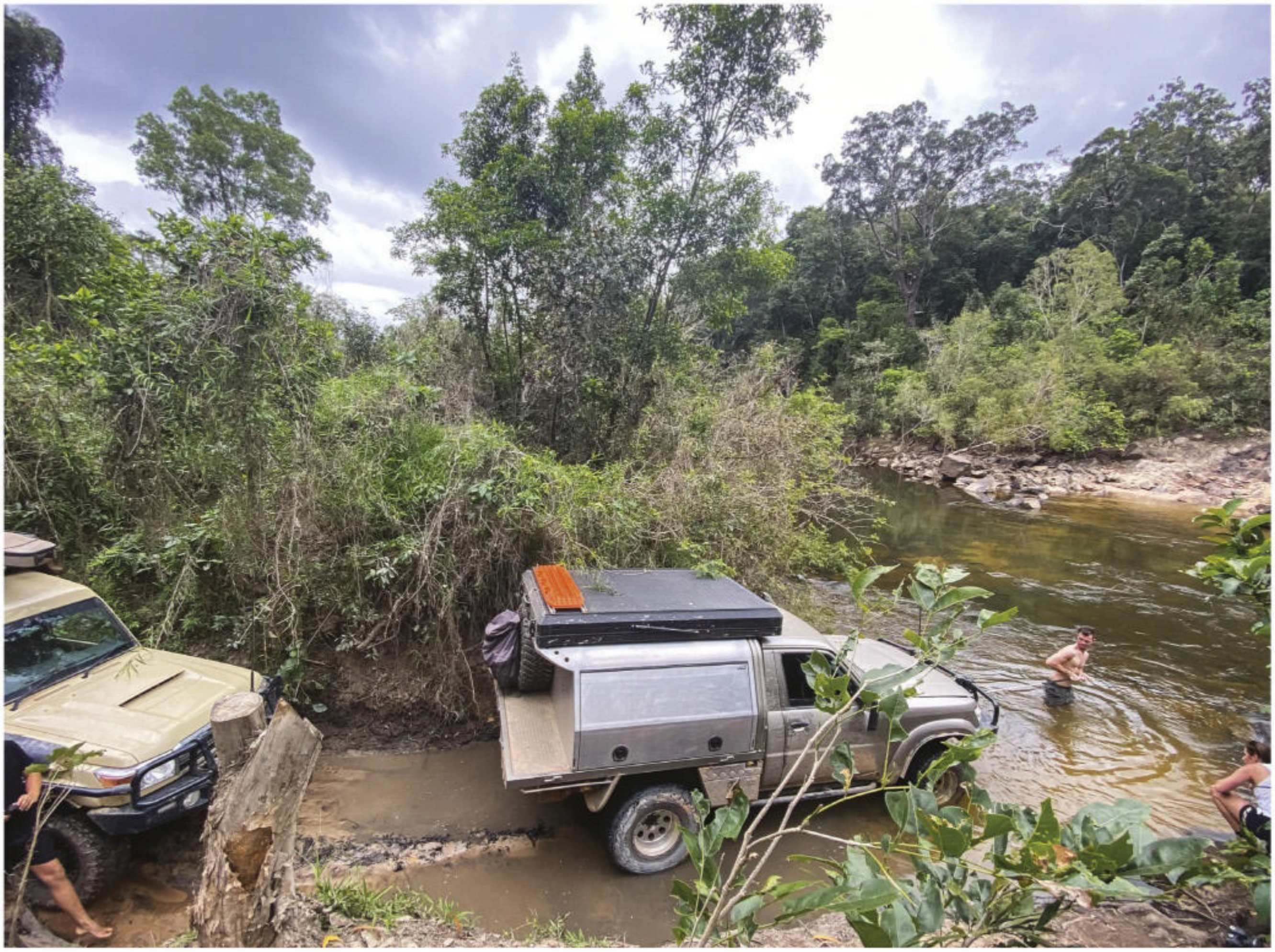
These towering dirt columns are often taller than me, and are built by billions of termites to serve as their home high above the seasonal monsoon rains. The architecture of these mounds has been studied for decades, and they are built perfectly oriented to the points of the compass to maximise cooling and minimise heating from the sun. Across Northern Australia termites build their nets in a variety of designs, each perfectly adapted to the particular environment in which they are located.

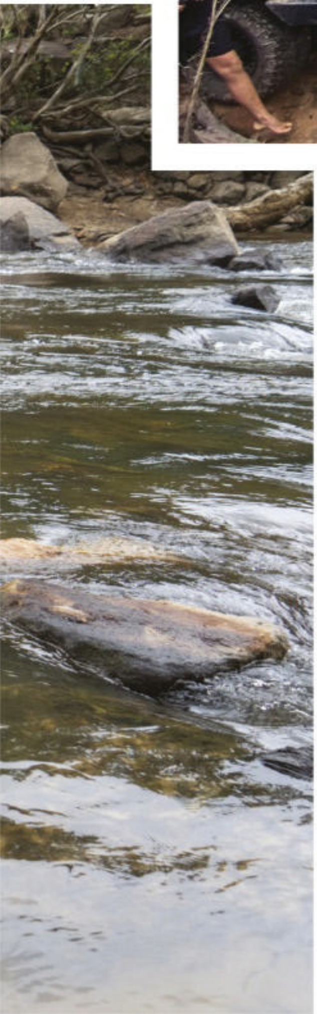
The deeply rutted sections of track and large wombat holes are the perfect opportunity to show off the immense flex of the Gladiator, and with Katie at the wheel the big Jeep easily crawls through every obstacle while the cab barely tilts. It's fascinating to watch the three vehicles take identical lines and come through with very different results. While the articulation of the Jeep allows it to crawl forward with all four wheels always finding traction, the big Troopy can barely keep even two wheels on the ground, and more than once has to reverse and take a different line for fear of a roll over.

We drop down a series of very rutted ledges, signalling our arrival at the mighty Pascoe River. In flood it is a rainy torrent many metres deep, and at very low water the rocks are exposed and it's possible to walk across without getting wet feet. In either of those two extremes the decision to cross or not would be easy, and basically makes itself. As we wade into the river, we quickly realise the decision we have to make sits somewhere in the infinite grey zone of maybe we should and maybe we really, really shouldn't.



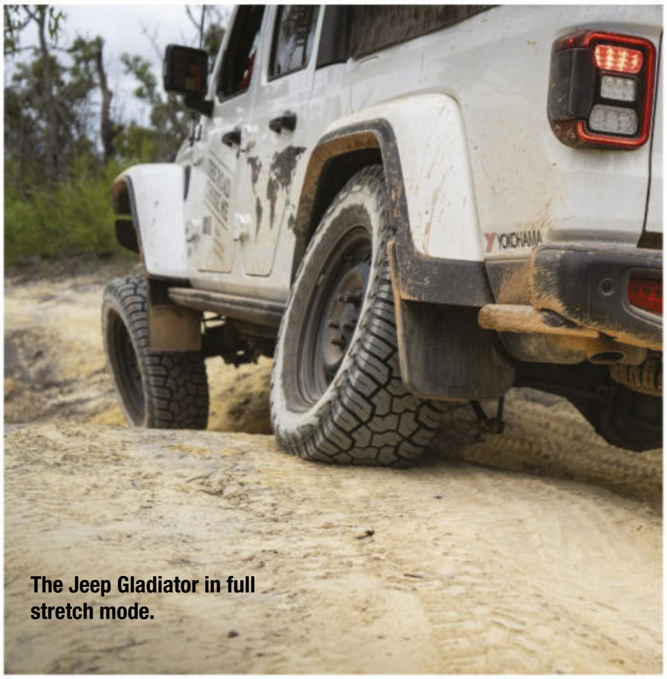
Pulling out the winch line is made even more exciting by this being croc country.





Josh and I are both reluctant to risk our vehicles, but Brad does not want to turn tail and backtrack. Eager to keep us moving forward, we all make a pact. Brad volunteers to go first, but if he makes it across relatively unscathed, we must follow. Swapping the order of the vehicles in the severely rutted track turns into a low-range 4x4 challenge, and after reversing as far as I can possibly go, Brad is barely able to squeeze up to the front of the line.

Josh wades across and secures Brad's winch to a solid tree on the far side, and will act as spotter while also pulling in the winch line if it's not needed. I'm at the rear of Brad's truck with Josh's winch spooled out and ready – if the signal is given I will jump in to action and pull Brad's truck backwards out of the river. After running over the plan multiple times and with everyone in place, the time is now.



The Jeep Gladiator in full stretch mode.

Brad eases into the flow, and just as the depth starts to be a serious concern he uses his patented right-foot technique and in a matter of seconds has crawled over rocks and out of the deepest section before soon reaching the far bank in one piece.

While Josh and I are relieved everything went to plan, our adrenaline quickly begins to peak, because Brad's successful crossing means we have to go next.

After resetting all the winch ropes, Josh lines up and soon a repeat performance plays out and he slowly inches into the water before rapidly moving up and out of the deepest section. From my vantage point at the rear the crossing looked straightforward, though later in the day Josh and Brad confirmed the fast flowing water nudged the LandCruiser sideways and it was a battle to keep it moving in the right direction.

Being last in the line-up means there is no backout plan for me, no matter what happens I'm committed to pushing through. I let the winch pull the Jeep for the first three or four feet, and just as the river starts to flow over the front corner of the bonnet I use a little throttle to climb up on to the biggest of the rocks. In low-range first with both diff locks I have no trouble with grip, and I move forward up and on to the larger boulders with ease. I don't feel or hear any undercarriage bangs or scrapes, and soon Josh is working overtime to pull in the winch line as I drive confidently through the river, arriving at the far bank unscathed, grinning like mad.

With a GoPro stranded on the far bank I wade back through the water solo, and can't stop thinking about crocs the entire time. When we were all in the water the danger seemed somehow less real, but all alone I feel particularly vulnerable. Coming back for the final time I move as quickly as I can, trying to keep my nerves under control.

PASCOE CROSSING

It's fascinating to watch the three vehicles take identical lines and come through with very different results

It's a rugged climb out of the Pascoe River.

It's a race to stay ahead of the Gladiator with the winch line.

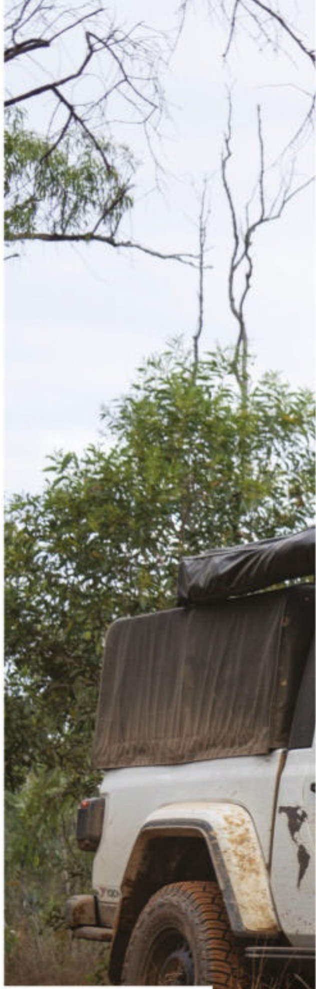
MUDHOLES AND WASHOUTS

AFTER all the excitement we stop for a hasty lunch above the river before continuing on, feeling proud to have cleared such a large obstacle. With little idea of the track that lies ahead, we're all certain we don't want to turn tail and retrace our steps across the Pascoe.

As we push further north the vegetation continues to change, permanently leaving the tropical rainforest behind for dry and dusty red dirt that is caked on all the trees and plants that line the track. We tackle the occasional mud pit and soggy section, and all manage to keep enough forward momentum in the sticky stuff.

Later in the afternoon we arrive on the banks of the Wenlock River, which we quickly see is much wider and shallower than the Pascoe. This river is a little lower and a little swampier, and I can't help feeling it looks a little more like croc habitat, so we all stay back from the bank and decide not to walk this one first. In the vehicles we enter the soft sand one at a time before driving along the riverbed for a hundred metres. The bottom is very firm, and none of us has any trouble leaving the water before tackling a short and steep climb up and out of the riverbed.

The shadows grow longer as we tackle the final wombat holes and corrugations, before bursting out on to the Peninsula Development Road just as the sun kisses the horizon. As we air up and share high fives, the already stunning orange and red dirt road flashes into a stunningly bright display of colour.



The Patrol drops in.

ANTHILL SKYSCRAPER

The depth, boulders and flow are more concerning at this point in time than man-eating crocodiles

AN ADVENTURE TO REMEMBER

WHILE dreaming this adventure I planned to tackle the hardest four-wheel drive tracks of my life, and Frenchmans was everything I dreamed of. I pushed my personal limits, successfully fording the most technical river I have attempted. Experiencing how the Jeep handled the severely rutted and washed-out track was confidence inspiring, with all four wheels almost always glued to the track.

We worked together as a team to overcome the challenges in our path, and I'm extremely happy with how well we communicated, planned and then safely executed each obstacle. I'm always thankful to spend time with people who approach difficult situations in the same careful and analytical manner as me, though I certainly learned a thing or two from Brad's slightly more gung-ho approach.

Tackling Frenchmans with friends meant I could push harder than I'm comfortable with when out solo, and it also made for a lot of laughter and good times. If you ever find yourself in Far North Queensland, I highly recommend you take the detour and have a crack at Frenchmans.

Frenchmans Track at the Pascoe River crossing exit,

FRENCHMANS TRACK, CAPE YORK, QLD

FAST FACTS

- The Frenchmans Track is 179km long from Archer River Roadhouse to Moreton Telegraph Station
- There is fuel at the Archer River Roadhouse and Bramwell Junction Roadhouse
- The best time to travel is May to October
- There is camping at the Archer River Roadhouse and Moreton Telegraph Station
- For navigation grab the Hema Cape York Atlas and Guide, and Hema Cape York Map

You can join Dan Grec on his expeditions around the world on YouTube and Instagram @TheRoadChoseMe

CUSTOM **TRAY BODIES**
CUSTOM **CANOPIES**
CUSTOM **VEHICLE FITOUTS**

AMVE 4x4 specialise in cutting edge design ,manufacture and fitting of all aftermarket accessories to any 4x4 utility. Our standard range includes Heavy duty custom built steel tray bodies, Heavy duty custom built aluminium tray bodies, Custom made dog cages, Toolbox's and custom built aluminium canopies. We also offer full custom vehicle builds and turn key packages. Our friendly experienced team of qualified staff aim to provide our customers with the highest possible standard of service along with a high quality product.

A.M.V.E 4x4
AMVE4X4
AMVE
A.M.V.E 4x4
A.M.V.E 4x4

Call us today 07 3277 1008

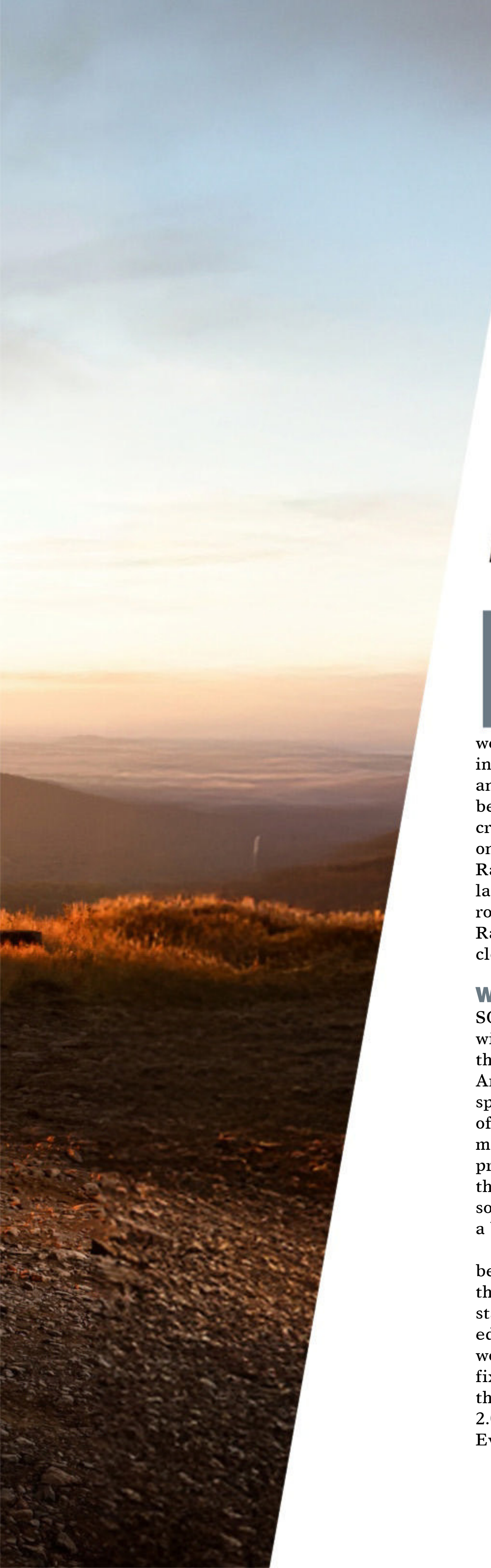
sales@amve4x4.com.au

www.amve.com.au

21 Wolston Road, Sumner QLD 4074

PEAK EVEREST

FORD HAS INTRODUCED A MORE OFF-ROAD CAPABLE 4X4 WAGON IN THE EVEREST TREMOR



IT SEEMS like buyers are catching on to the charms of off-road wagons over utes. A decade in the making, the slow-burn Everest is starting to flex its showroom muscles and as we speak, the vehicle is in first place in its segment (SUVs under $80K) and in 2024 was the country's sixth best selling vehicle outright. And, crucially, where the family wagon once made up a tiny percentage of Ranger/Everest volumes, in 2024 the landscape changed dramatically with roughly 26,500 Everests sold to 60,000 Rangers. That's getting dangerously close to 50 per cent. Look out Ranger!

WHAT IS IT?

SO it's no wonder Ford Oz is coming up with niches within niches to broaden the Everest's appeal even further. And the latest is a badge – if not the specification – you've probably heard of. Sitting near the top of the Everest model ladder, the Everest Tremor provides the off-road counterpoint to the urban-warrior Platinum, and offers some serious mods aimed at making it a better bush weapon.

Tremor? Yep, you've seen the badge before on the Ranger Tremor, but the formula is not the same. For a start, the Ranger version is a limited-edition model, while in the Everest world, the Tremor will be a permanent fixture in the brochure. And where the Ranger Tremor runs the bi-turbo 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine, in the Everest, the Tremor badge buys you the 3.0-litre V6 turbo-diesel. Throw in the 10-speed automatic gearbox and permanent four-wheel drive, and the Everest Tremor scores the driveline specification that is arguably the one you want.

But that's not all. Ford has also given the Tremor a new set of suspenders and some extra air under the bash plates. The dampers have been upgraded to Bilstein position-sensitive monotube gas-filled units complete with remote reservoirs. This is high-end stuff and it shows how serious Ford is about this model. Ditto the fact that Ford elected to tune the Tremor to our tastes right here in Australia with a dedicated engineering team.

The new springs provide an extra 29mm of ground clearance (for a total of 255mm) and a revised offset for the 17x8-inch alloys mean the front and rear track have grown by 30mm. Departure, approach and rampover angles are all improved by a couple of degrees too, and Ford has wisely fitted General Grabber 265/70R17 all-terrain tyres as standard. You also get auxiliary driving lights, steel bash plates and a pair of rated tow hooks at the front. Tyre pressure monitoring is another great touch and the side steps are now made from a composite material for more rut-resistance.

Ford dealers will be demanding $76,590 (plus on-road costs) for the privilege of driving away in a Tremor. Oh, and an extra 200 bills if you want a premium colour (like the hero grey).

New in the traction tricks department is Rock Crawl mode.

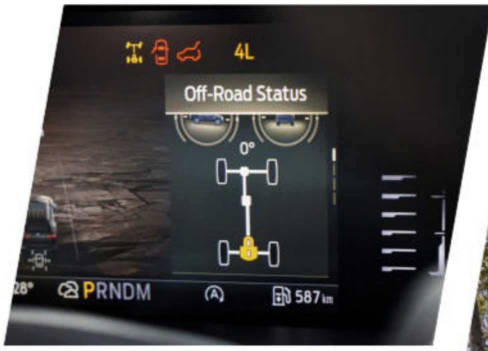
SAFETY

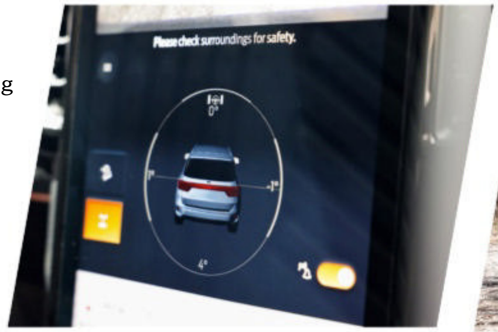
THIS is one area Ford has taken very seriously and the strides made in the Ranger (to comply with OH&S demands) have been transferred to the Everest, which means it gets all the latest driver aids including Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB), adaptive cruise-control, traffic sign recognition, lane-keeping assistance and rear cross-traffic alert. The AEB works up to 130km/h, but its pedestrian and cyclist identification only works up to 80km/h.

The lane-keeping assist program goes against the current grain by actually being reasonably subtle, making 'suggestions' through the helm rather than shouting orders. The surround camera and front-facing camera is also brilliant off road.

The Tremor also gets the Everest's nine airbags, including a centre bag to prevent head clashes in a side impact, and then there's that tyre-pressure monitoring; worth its weight in gold.

All Everest variants carry a five-star ANCAP safety rating.





POWERTRAIN

THE V6 turbo-diesel might be getting a bit long in the tooth but it's still a great unit. The 10-speed auto needs no introduction now and the ability to use four-wheel drive on wet bitumen is – when towing, especially – a big win.

As well as the existing drive modes (Sand, Eco, Tow/Haul, Slippery, Mud/Ruts and Normal) there's a new spot on the dial called Rock Crawl. There's the same standard rear diff lock as all Everest 4x4s which can operate at up to 32km/h.

The headline numbers for the engine are 184kW and 600Nm, and fuel economy is probably the major trade-off for the Tremor using the V6 over the bi-turbo. Figure on using somewhere between 12 and 14 litres per 100km in mixed, general use.

The Everest Tremor retains the 3.0-litre V6 turbo-diesel and 10-speed auto driveline.

Making up Ford's new off-road focused Tremor range are Ranger and Everest.

THE HEADLINE NUMBERS FOR THE ENGINE ARE 184KW AND 600NM, AND FUEL ECONOMY IS PROBABLY THE MAJOR TRADE-OFF FOR THE TREMOR USING THE V6 OVER THE BI-TURBO

GRABBER AT3
GENERAL

ON & OFF-ROAD PERFORMANCE

THE big difference between the Tremor and other V6 Everests is in the way it rides. The jacked-up, firmed-up suspension doesn't ruin it by any means, but it does give the ride a firmer edge compared with the relatively plush ride of the Everest on standard springs and dampers.

However, it doesn't diminish the sharpness or the accuracy of the steering, nor does it alter the fact that the V6 is a magic piece of kit (the one we drove seemed even smoother than previous examples) and seems a really good match for the 10-speed auto. And the option to use full-time 4x4 on the highway in the wet is equally brilliant.

It is, of course, in the mulga where the Tremor-specific stuff comes in to play. The lift gives a higher (literally) safety margin when dropping into ruts, and the bash plates equal peace of mind, too. But it's the extra suspension travel and the brilliant control those dampers offer that really sets the Tremor apart. Extra firmness aside, at low speeds you can feel the dampers doing their best to keep each tyre planted and contributing to forward progress.

The Everest Tremor is a vehicle that will really take some stopping.

The Everest Tremor has a ground clearance of 255mm and 800mm wading depth.

The Tremor's raised and off-road specific suspension gives it a firmer ride than others in the Everest line-up.

PRACTICALITIES

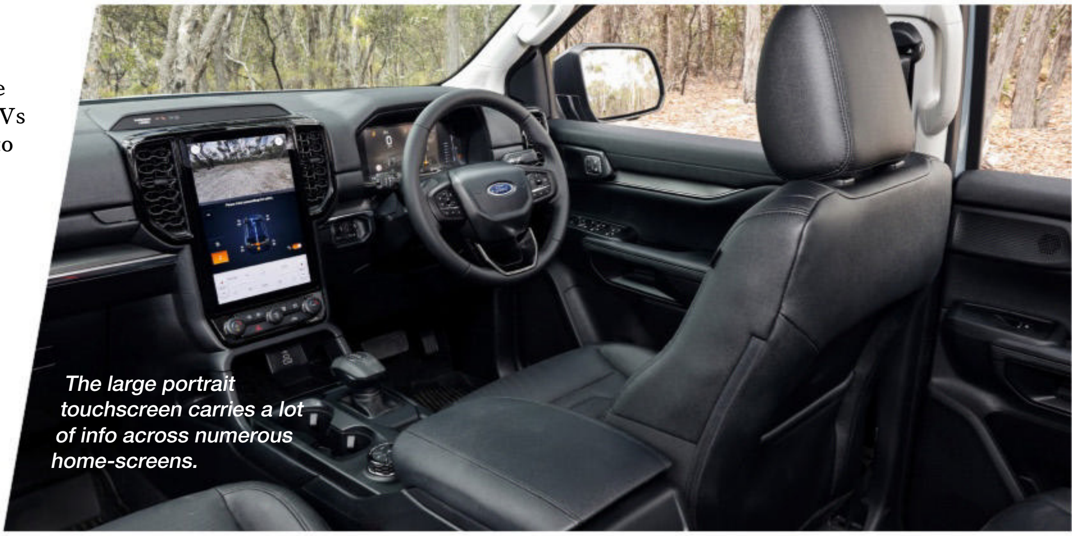
WITH the potential to seat seven, the Everest is already ahead of many SUVs and all dual-cab utes when it comes to accommodation

There are loads of storage cubbies, charging ports and power outlets around the cabin and luggage space, and the third-row passengers also get cupholders and storage bins. The second-row seat folds 60:40 and with all the rear seats stowed, the Everest offers a big load space.

The large portrait touchscreen in the centre carries a lot of info, across numerous home-screens, so you need some time to get to grips with that. The steering column is reach and height adjustable and there's keyless entry and start.

We're not so keen on having to engage the rear diff lock from the touchscreen; what's wrong with a button?

Towing, are we? Then the Everest should still make your shortlist with its 3500kg braked-trailer limit that puts it up there with the best dual cabs other than the huge American-made stuff.



The large portrait touchscreen carries a lot of info across numerous home-screens.

FORD EVEREST TREMOR	
PRICE	$76,590 +ORC
ENGINE	V6 turbo-diesel
CAPACITY	3.0L
MAX POWER	184kW at 3250rpm
MAX TORQUE	600Nm at 1750 to 2250rpm
TRANSMISSION	10-speed automatic
4X4 SYSTEM	Full time 4x4, dual range, rear diff lock
CRAWL RATIO	N/A
CONSTRUCTION	7-seat wagon body on ladder-frame chassis
FRONT SUSPENSION	Independent, struts w/ coil springs
REAR SUSPENSION	Live axle, Watt's linkage, coil springs
TYRES	265/70R17 General Grabber on alloys
KERB WEIGHT	2550kg
GVM	3240kg
GCM	6350kg
TOWING CAPACITY	3500kg
PAYLOAD	690kg
SEATS	7
FUEL TANK	80L
ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION	9.5L/100km
ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION	N/A

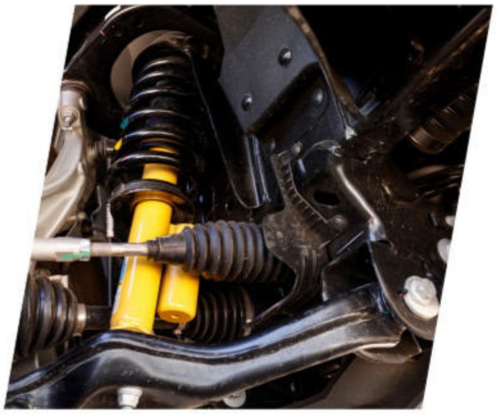
VERDICT

THERE'S one important truth we need to deal with here. And that is, if you're buying the Tremor because it looks tough with the inch-and-a-bit lift, or for the hero blue-grey paint job, then you might be making a mistake. See, the Everest even in its most basic Ambiente form still gets a locking rear diff and is still a very capable thing in the bush. More than capable, impressive.

Yes, the Tremor will go farther with the extra clearance, flex and the grunt of the V6 engine, but unless you have big, big off-road plans that require this extra ability, then maybe the Tremor package will stop making sense. And that's purely down to the trade-off in ride quality on bitumen.

You'll also use more fuel than an Everest with the bi-turbo 2.0L engine and your monthly lease repayments will be larger, too.

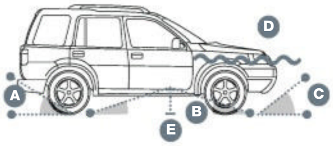
But if you are tackling the north approach of a buttered cliff face, then the Tremor, of all the Everests, has the smarts to get you up and, critically, back down in one piece. Your call.



The suspension upgrade is high-end stuff and it shows how serious Ford is about this model.

FORD EVEREST TREMOR

A	DEPARTURE ANGLE	26.8°
B	RAMPOVER ANGLE	23.9°
C	APPROACH ANGLE	32°
D	WADING DEPTH	800mm
E	GROUND CLEARANCE	255mm



THE DAMPERS HAVE BEEN UPGRADED TO BILSTEIN POSITION-SENSITIVE MONOTUBE GAS-FILLED UNITS COMPLETE WITH REMOTE RESERVOIRS

AT HOME ON THE RANGE

WORDS AND PHOTOS KEV SMITH

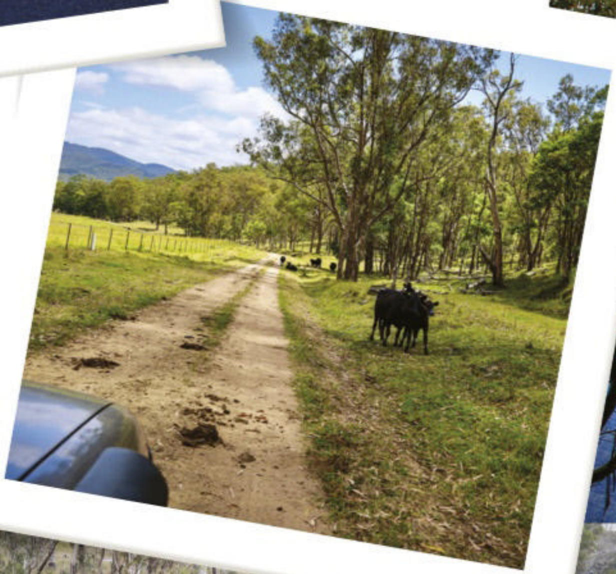
One of Kev Smith's favourite places is in his own backyard; the New England area of the Great Dividing Range on NSW's north coast

THE Great Dividing Range, which extends 3500km along our eastern seaboard, is the fifth-longest continuous mountain range in the world. It has many diverse and unique pockets, plateaus, mountains and gorges, and running parallel to the coast, there are several spots where the mountains meet the sea. There are waterways on either side of the range, impressive swamp areas, vast plains and lowlands, all created from massive upheavals during the volcanic era around 270 million years ago.

One of my favourite parts of the Great Dividing Range is just 90-minutes-drive west of Coffs Harbour on the NSW north coast, which is known for its dramatic gorges, waterfalls and granite outcrops. My starting point on this trip is the little hamlet of Ebor, surrounded by world heritage areas, several national parks, many walking trails and some of the best waterfalls you'll ever see. While there's not much in Ebor itself, it's an essential stop when passing through to stretch the legs, and to catch a glimpse of Ebor Falls just a few minutes out of town.

EBOR PUB
EBOR HOTEL
FALLS MOTEL
LUNCH

The hamlet of Ebor is surrounded by world heritage areas, several national parks and walking trails.



Through Aberfoyle Track farmland.

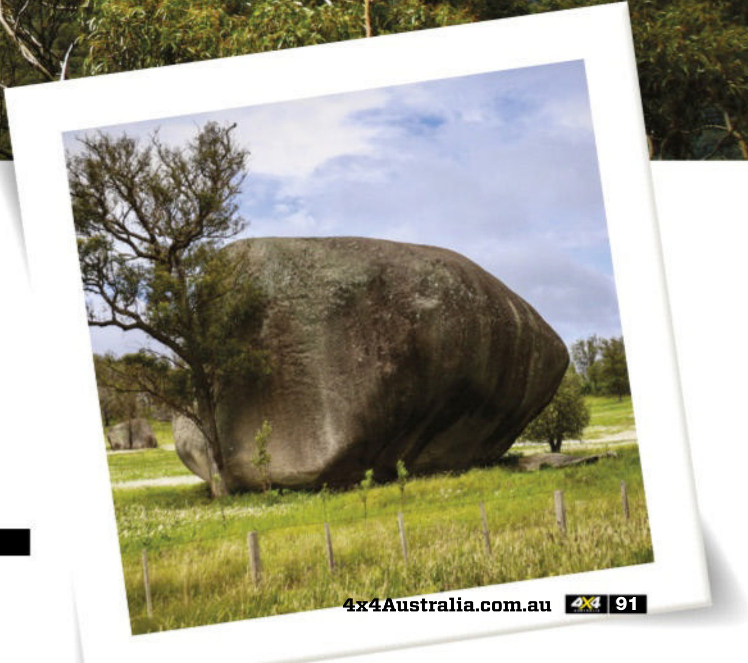
IN AND AROUND EBOR

EBOR Falls is a twin-drop waterfall that flows north into the rugged Guy Fawkes NP and eventually into the Clarence River system 100km away. Around the falls, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has upgraded the viewing points, walking trails and amenities. Columns of basalt line part of the 115m-high waterfall cliffs that were formed during the volcanic push.

Nearby, Cathedral Rock NP offers great isolated camping and the adventurous can hike into the park and climb the massive granite tors from which there are stunning 360° views across the dry eucalyptus forests and other outcrops. The walk in is classed as a medium to hard track so make sure you're prepared; the coldest recorded temperature here is -7°C. Round Mountain can be viewed from the top of the tors and with an elevation of 1586m it is the highest peak outside the Snowy Mountains. With an abundance of wildlife, threatened plant species and peaceful camping, Cathedral Rock NP is a special place to visit.

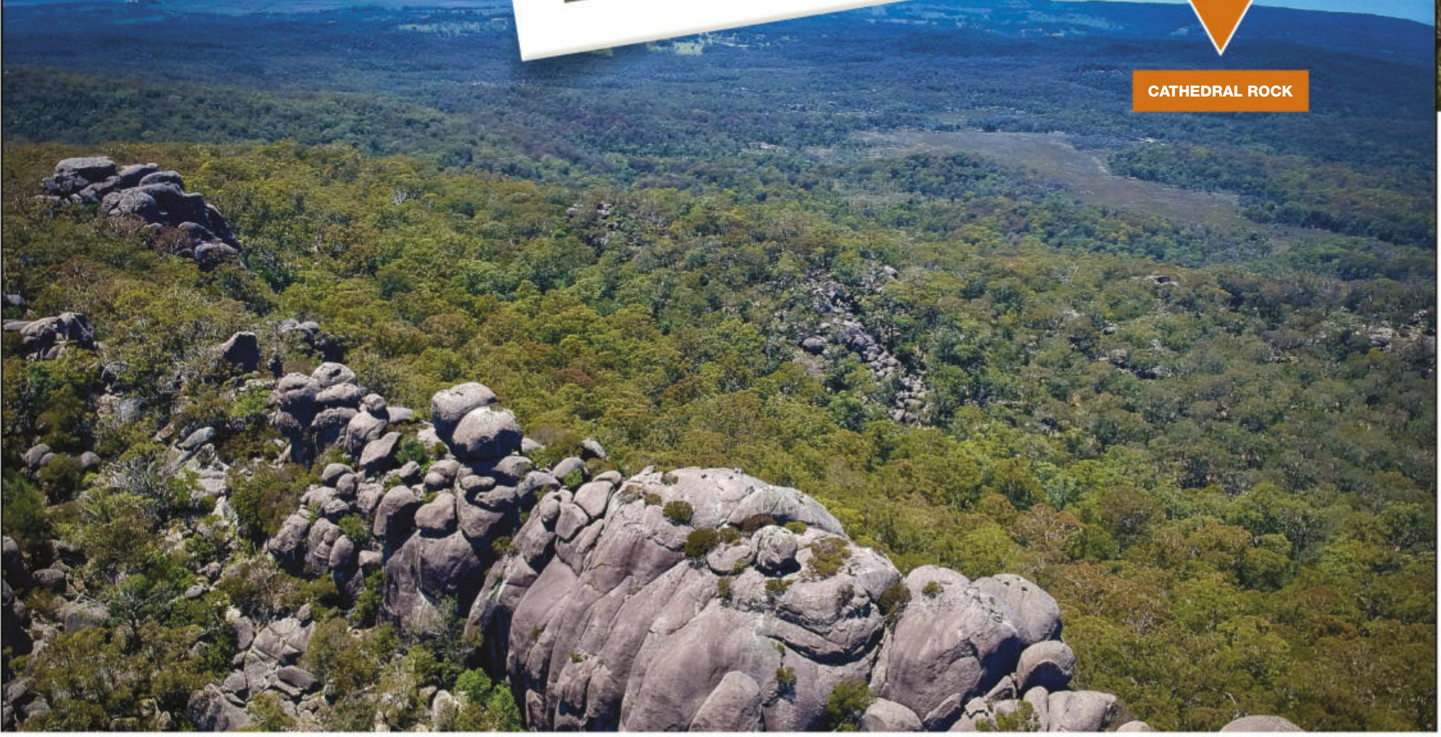
An hour's drive away is Point Lookout in the New England NP and from here, on a good day, you can see the Pacific Ocean 60km away. Around the escarpment, there are plenty of walking tracks to keep you busy for days and from the main lookout the weathered-down rim of the extinct Ebor volcano can be spotted. This section of the New England NP defines which way water runs into different catchment areas along the coast and inland. On a good day, there's plenty of wildlife around including eastern grey kangaroos, possums, the quiet spotted-tail quoll, shy superb lyrebirds, cuckoos and kookaburras.

Round Mountain can be viewed from the top of the tors and with an elevation of 1586m it is the highest peak outside the Snowy Mountains



Historical church with a few new updates.

The Aberfoyle Track consists of designated and signposted roads that pass through farms and state forests.



ABERFOYLE TRACK

ON TO ABERFOYLE

AFTER soaking up the natural attractions around Ebor, I headed 38km west to Aberfoyle, which is a locality named after a cattle station in the area that you pass through heading up along Nowlands Road. Being a working station, stock wanders beside and across the road, so take care. I soon came to Wards Mistake, supposedly named after bushranger Captain Thunderbolt (aka Fred Ward) who roamed this section of the tablelands. One of the stories is that Fred was shot by a trooper here, but upon inspecting the body it was discovered to be Fred's brother.

Since it was explored by John Oxley in the 1880s, the New England area has always been renowned for its rich pastoral land. In 1889 gold was found here too, and Kookabookra was settled on the banks of the Sara River. Lasting only five years, there were more than 300 miners here searching for gold in the nearby Bear Hill mine and other smaller claims.

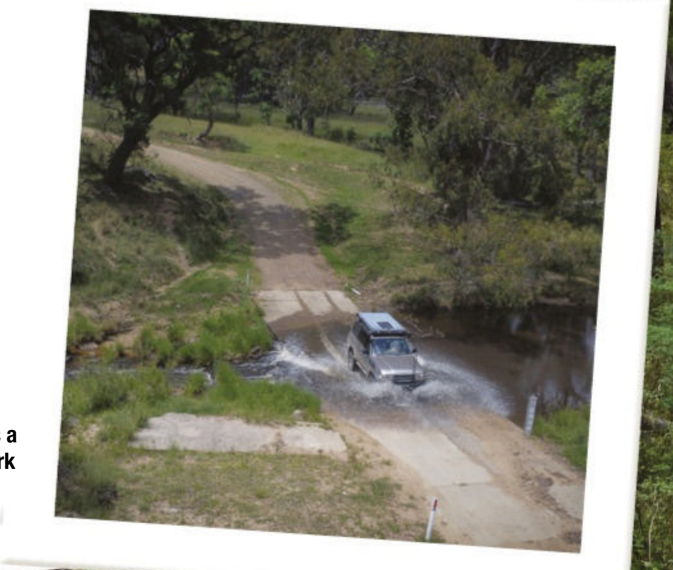
Today fossickers come to the area to search for gems such as topaz, quartz crystals and sapphires. In the boom period Kookabookra had a hotel, butchery, post office and even a police station to control claim jumpers. Sadly today there are no streets left, no buildings, not even a sign suggesting what was once here. The miners and shopkeepers just moved on to the next new mining area.

Granite outcrops shadow the valleys of Warra and there are significant flora and fauna specimens that are protected in the park

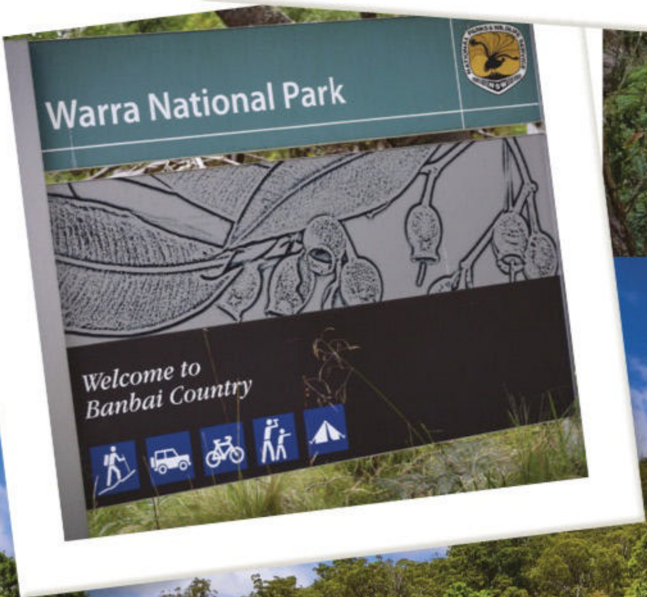
TRACKS LESS TRAVELLED

MUCH of the driving along this part of the New England area is on nice dirt roads, but there are a few rougher side tracks to explore. To the east is London Bridge State Forest where the tracks narrow down and head out to the top of the Guy Fawkes wilderness area. The tracks aren't too hard, but it's a fun drive exploring on the way into Moggs Swamp. West of Kookabookra is Warra National Park, which covers 20.4km². It's a small but beautiful park where you can camp down on 'The Green', take a walk down to the Sara River to swim in its cool waters, and simply soak up the park's serenity.

Granite outcrops shadow the valleys of Warra and there are significant flora and fauna specimens that are protected in the park. Leaving Warra and the scenic tracks I headed further north and jumped on to Oakwood Trail. I've been out here before to explore and this time



Water crossing on Aberfoyle Track.



Warra National Park is a small but beautiful park to visit.

didn't disappoint, with several deep creek crossings, and rutty and rocky hills. When you pass through farms you'll need to leave the gates as you find them. Oakwood is only 20km long, but because it's not a frequently driven track and is not maintained, it's a good 4x4 diversion for a couple of hours. The track ends on Pretty Gully Road at Pinkett, which is a locality and a sports oval for day users.

Fertile pastoral properties soon give way to the busy town of Glen Innes, just 30km away. Known for its Celtic festivals, cool climate and for being part of the Fossickers Way, Glen Innes is also surrounded by world heritage national parks and lush rolling hills. While there's no hard four-wheel driving around this area, sometimes it's nice to just sit back and explore a region's little secrets so close to home.

Since it was explored by John Oxley in the 1880s, the New England area has always been renowned for its rich pastoral land

NEW ENGLAND, NSW

FAST FACTS

WHERE TO GO

The New England area covers a huge 98,500km² across the Great Dividing Range of NSW. The Aberfoyle area is located on the eastern side between Armidale and Glen Innes with Ebor at the far eastern boundary. Ebor is a good 90-minute drive from the coastal rush of Coffs Harbour.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Exploring this rich region with its diverse range of flora and fauna is just the start. From Ebor, there are the remnants of an ancient volcano, the stunning Ebor Falls and a cool beer at the Ebor pub.

For the adventurers on foot, just out of Ebor is Cathedral Rock, where you can scramble up some of the 270 million-year-old granite boulders. Nearby is Round Mountain which is the highest peak in the area at 1584m above sea level, and the highest this side of the Snowy Mountains.

The Aberfoyle Tableland Track follows ridge lines that are more than 1000m above sea level where you can explore fossicking grounds, camp in pristine areas and admire old-growth forests. If the season is right, wildflowers cover the paddocks.

OTHER INFO

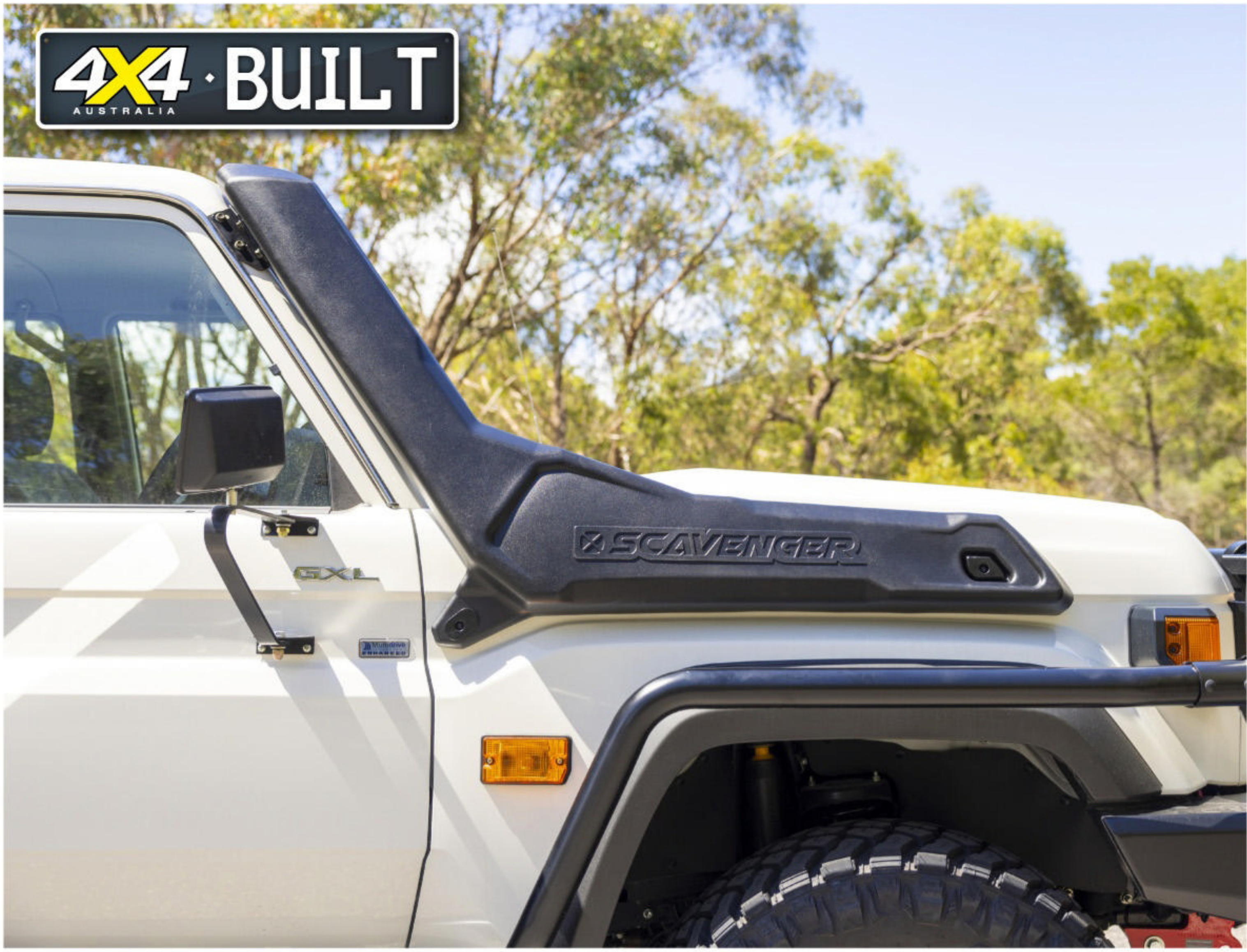
The Aberfoyle Tableland Track consists of designated and signposted roads that pass through farms, state forests and include a side diversion to Warra NP. They are generally open most of the year.

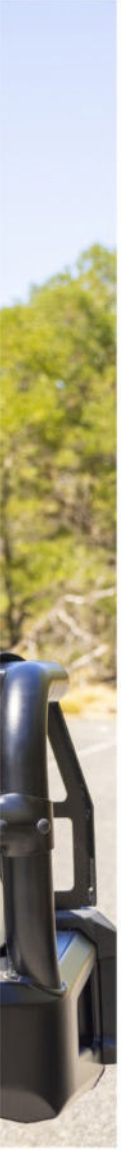
The best time to visit is in spring or early summer. Winter in this area can be bitterly cold and it sometimes snows. You can contact the relevant authorities to check weather and track conditions, or call the Ebor pub on (02) 6775 9155.

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS **PHOTOS** ELLEN DEWAR

BREATHE EASY

WE FIT A NEW AUSSIE-MADE SCAVENGER SNORKEL TO OUR LANDCRUISER TO PROTECT IT AGAINST AGAINST AIRBORNE CONTAMINANTS


4X4 AUSTRALIA · BUILT
SCAVENGER
GXL



NEW FILTER The original Toyota airbox is fine, it's the filter that will be replaced.

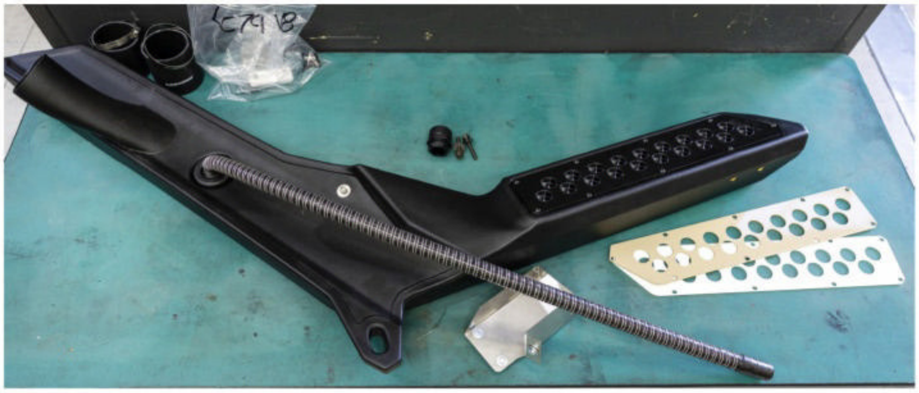
PRO JOB We sought the services of Marks 4WD to replace the factory air-intake system.

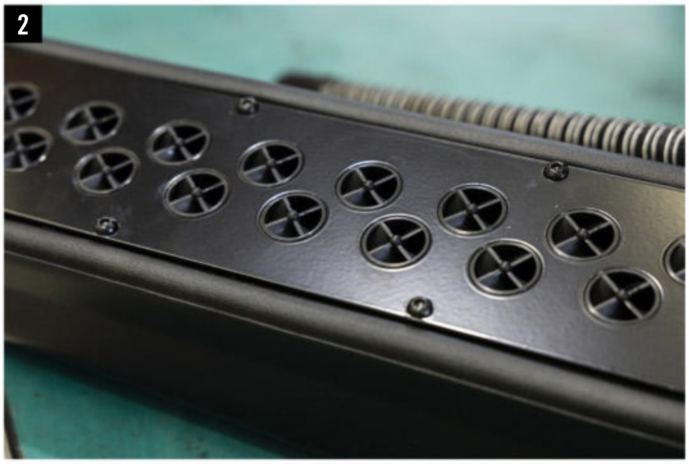
AIR-INTAKE snorkels for 4x4 vehicles have evolved considerably over the years, but at the end of the day they are all designed to do the same job: To supply clean dry air to the intake of the engine in a way that is better than the OEM set-up.

Some 4x4 specialist OEMs take off-road use in to consideration when designing the intakes on their vehicles, and many of them offer an intake snorkel as an accessory, but more often than not the OEM will call it a 'raised air intake' rather than a snorkel, and the inclusion of such a device does not raise or change the quoted safe wading depth of the vehicle.

While fabricated metal intake snorkels have become more popular over recent years, traditional plastic snorkels have also evolved to supply more air to the engine, with the higher-quality brands using optimised plastics and flow-tested designs to ensure longevity of their products in harsh environments and the best airflow to the engine. And yes, even these evolved products just do the same old job of providing clean air to the engine's airbox.

It was with much interest that we saw a different looking intake snorkel fitted to a LandCruiser at the 2024 Melbourne 4x4 Show. The snorkel was an early prototype of an all-new product from Scavenger Advanced Air Filtration and, while it appears to follow a familiar design at first look, there's a lot more to it.





1. Installation kit includes templates.
2.Air enters the Scavenger via these cyclonic holes that help seperate any contaminants..
3. Connecting the vacuum hose to the snorkel.
4. Vacuum hose in place, it's time to refit the airbox.

BUILD IT BETTER

SCAVENGER came from a need to create a better way to get clean air into the engines of 4x4 vehicles, at a time when there was a lot of talk about 'dusting' in Toyota diesel engines and perceived problems with the OEM intake system. Dusting is a term used to describe what happens when dust and grit gets past the air filter that is in the airbox, and then into the engine itself. Once this dust gets into the engine it can make its way into the cylinders and score the bores, which was a problem being found in affected engines.

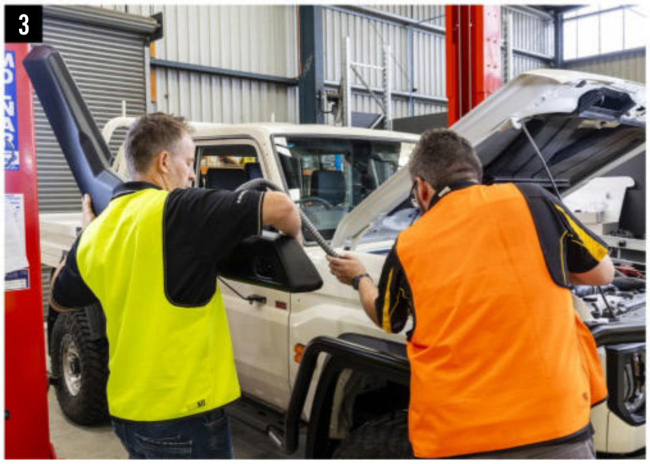
Scavenger Advanced Air Filtration is a part of Western Australian company Work Air Technologies, a leader in the business of cabin filtration, particularly in mining vehicles. Scavenger started looking more closely at the problems occurring in diesel engines and the best way to remedy them.

Cabin filtration is of utmost importance for the health and safety of workers in the mining industry and Work Air Technologies is the leader in this space. The company uses Freudenburg filters for this important work and these are regarded as some of the best in the business.

The company's testing of OEM intakes and airboxes showed that the problem of dusting was coming from deformation of the OEM panel filter element due to the pressure put on it when the engine was under load. This flex in the OE filter

DUST BUSTER The vacuum hose removes dust particles to the rear of the radiator fan.

3



4

allowed dust to get around the edges of the panel, so the problem was not with the airbox itself as many had claimed.

Freudenburg's solution was a replacement panel filter that is much more rigid than the OE part, and is one that doesn't deform and allow anything to enter the engine that doesn't pass through the filter itself.

The testing done by Work Air Technologies revealed that there was more that could be done to reduce the amount of contaminants that get through to the filter itself, and this led to the development of Scavenger Advanced Air Intake Systems, or put simply, Scavenger Snorkels.

WORLD'S BEST FILTER

The Scavenger Snorkel system features the highest efficiency filter on the market, designed to capture submicron particles that standard filters miss, thereby enhancing engine longevity.

Freudenberg filters are known for their superior quality, offering excellent flow, filtration efficiency and durability. Using advanced multi-layered media technology, these filters effectively capture a wide range of particles, from coarse dust to fine pollutants. The high-performance synthetic fibres with electrostatic surface charging optimise airflow while maximising particle retention.

Head to freudenberg-filter.com.au for more information.

COMPLETED Editor Matt inspects the Marks 4WD snorkel installation.

CLEAN CHARGE

WITH standard and most aftermarket intake snorkels, the air coming down the snorkel body and hitting the filter panel is unfiltered and it can contain a lot of grit and contaminants. The Scavenger Snorkel is claimed to remove up to 75 per cent of those contaminants – be they dust, grit or even water droplets – from the intake tract before they get a chance to hit the filter panel. It does this in a couple of ways.

The intake of the Scavenger Snorkel bolts to the A-pillar just like most other snorkels, but the opening in the head faces across the windscreen where it draws pressure-fed air that has hit the screen.

Upon entering the Scavenger Snorkel, the air passes through a section of cyclonic pre-separators that remove the contaminants from the air charge. As the contaminants and air move down the body of the snorkel, the contaminants are siphoned off to the atmosphere so that they don't reach the airbox or filter at all. This siphoning-off occurs through a port with a hose that runs down to the OE fan shroud where contaminants are sucked out using the vacuum generated by the engine's cooling fan. It seems simple but it took plenty of development and engineering to get right, and it allows Scavenger to make that claim regarding a 75 per cent reduction in dust and water droplets reaching the airbox.

Once the pre-filtered intake charge reaches the Freudenburg filter in the OE airbox, the filter itself has fewer contaminants to contain, which also reduces the amount of dust that builds up in and on the filter itself. The Freudenberg filter then purifies the air, ensuring that only the cleanest air reaches the engine for efficient and long-lasting performance.

The Scavenger Snorkel is manufactured in Australia using a UV stable, high-gloss polyethylene material that is made to withstand the climatic conditions of the Australian outback. Work Air Technologies supplies a limited lifetime warranty on Scavenger Snorkels. The intake face panel is aluminium and is available in a range of finishes to suit your vehicle. Also included with the kit are comprehensive fitting instructions, installation templates, required hoses and adapters, and quality hardware to complete the install.

Extensive airflow and durability testing of the snorkel and filter were done in the development stage to ensure airflow is maintained and is in fact better than that delivered by the OE set-up.

At present there are Scavenger Snorkels available to suit both the VDJ and GDJ 70 Series LandCruisers, the Toyota N80 HiLux and the 2022-on Ford Everest and Ranger models.

We chose to have our good friends at Marks 4WD (www.marks4wd.com) do the installation on our VDJ79 LandCruiser. Marks is a distributor for Scavenger Snorkels and it took the guys there a good half day to remove the OE Toyota snorkel and complete the Scavenger installation.

Anyone who has driven a 70 Series with the factory raised air intake will know how much noise the intake creates, both induction and wind noise. Driving our Cruiser with the factory intake to Marks in the morning, and then out of there in the afternoon, was like chalk and cheese; both intake and wind noise were reduced significantly, making the cabin a much quieter place to travel in. We hit the highway and got the Cruiser up to 100km/h and still there was almost no wind noise coming from the snorkel, resulting in a huge improvement in driving comfort.

RATED

RRP: $2100

AVAILABLE FROM: www.scavengersnorkels.com.au

WE SAY: A top-quality Australian engineered and manufactured snorkel that provides the ultimate protection for a Cruiser's engine along with reduced noise compared to the OE raised air intake.

NOISE REDUCED Apart from having the ultimate in air filtration, the Scavenger snorkel is noticeably quiet underway.

AFN
4X4 AUSTRALIA

DON'T JUST SETTLE FOR THE SAME OLD BULL

FORD EVEREST/RANGER
NEXT GEN
(FULL BULLBAR)
AFN
4X4 AUSTRALIA

DON'T GET BOXED IN WITH OUTDATED DESIGNS

AFN
4X4 AUSTRALIA

1300 AFN 4x4 | www.afn4x4.com.au
sales@afn4x4.com.au | 85 Kabi Circuit, Deception Bay, Qld 4508
facebook.com/AFN4x4australia

VISIT WWW.AFN4X4.COM.AU FOR A DEALER NEAR YOU

SUBSCRIBE TO

4X4
AUSTRALIA

SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- ✓ Huge savings on the regular cover price
- ✓ Free delivery to your doorstep
- ✓ Exclusive benefits and discounts
- ✓ Plus... free access to our digital magazine archive
  - browse over 8 years worth of back issues online
  - early access to the latest issue
  - browse from any device

SELECT A PACKAGE:

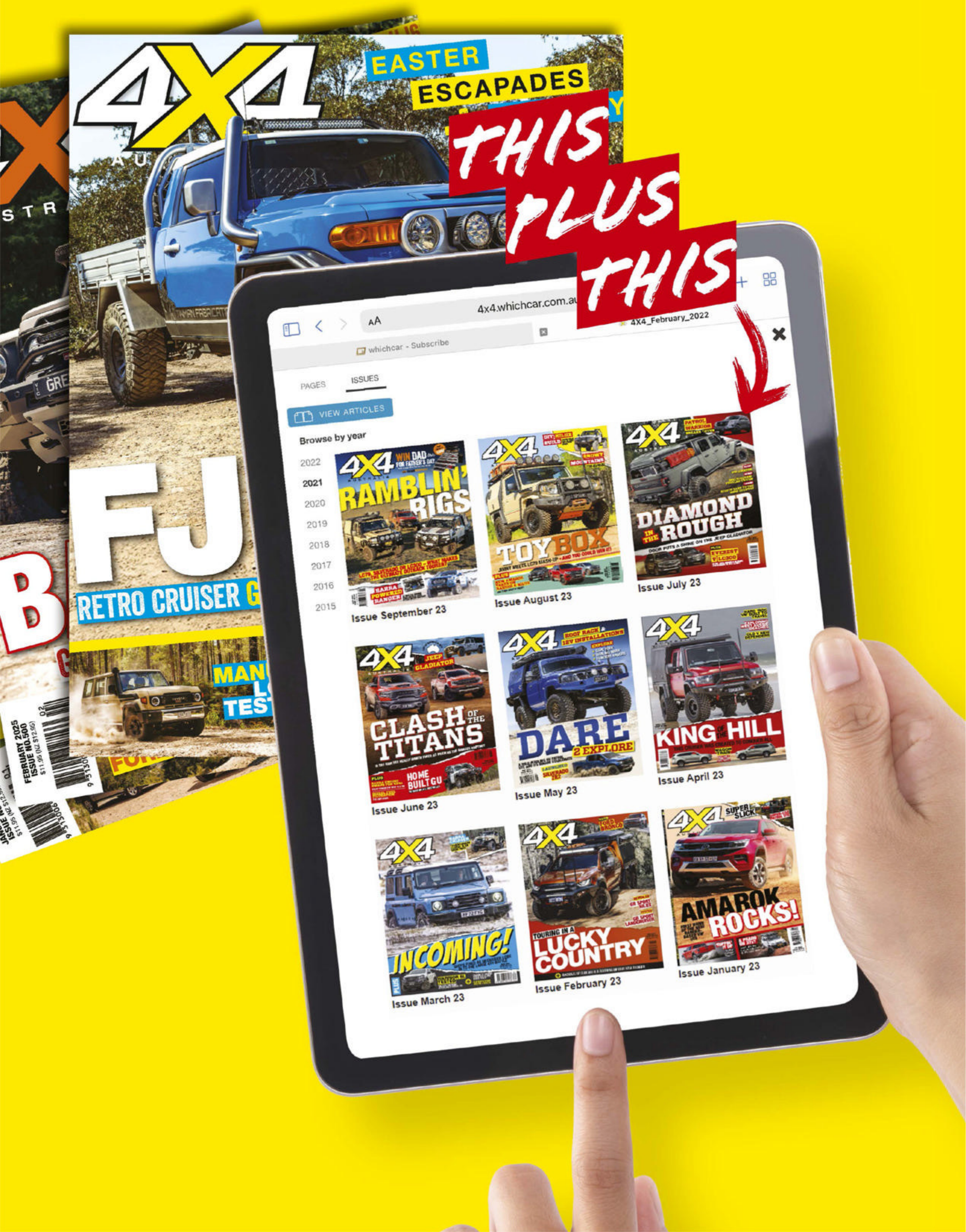
6 ISSUES $59 SAVE 18%

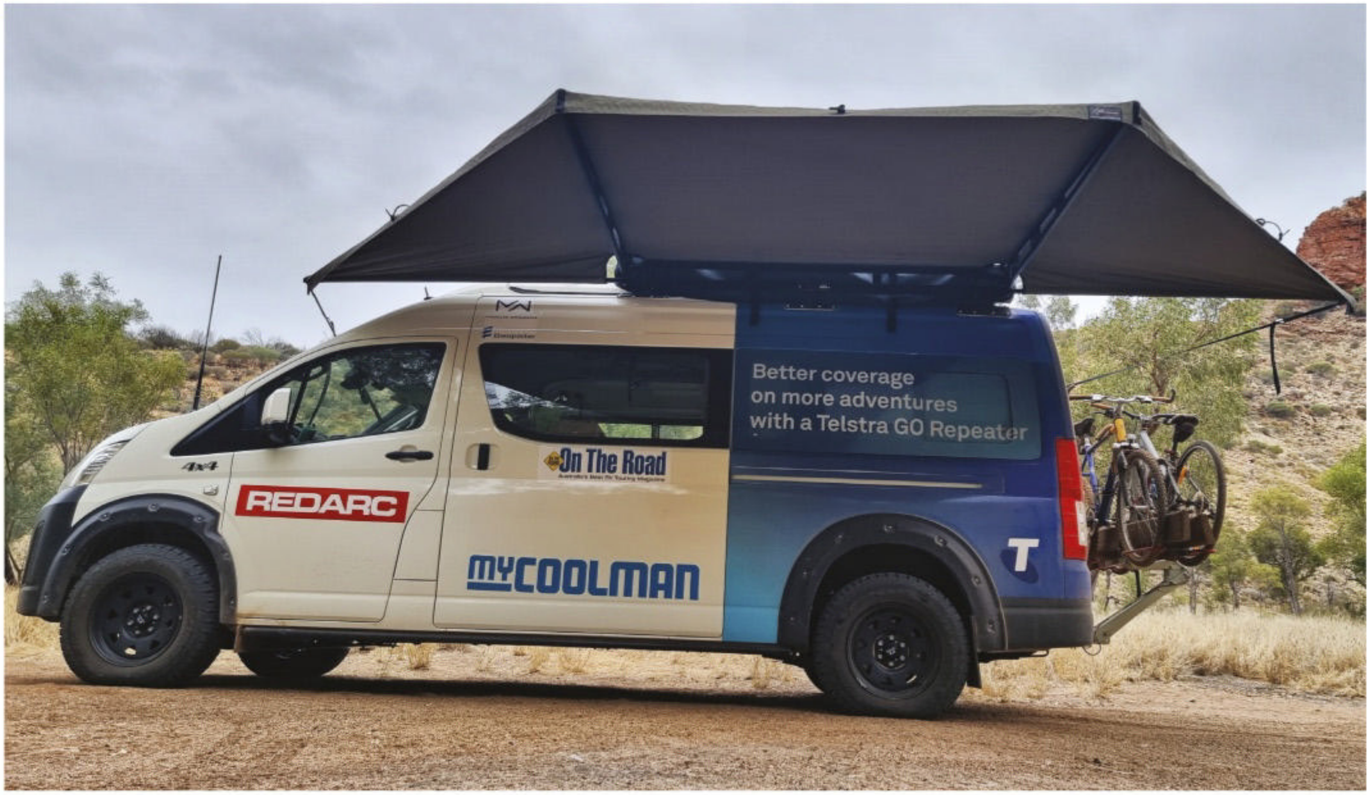
12 ISSUES $109 SAVE 30%

24 ISSUES $199 SAVE 35%!

Scan the QR code or phone our
Australian-based call centre on
(02) 8315 2092
or visit secure.whichcar.com.au/4x4Aus

Offer valid until 30/05/2025. Prices shown are in AUD and available for Australian Delivery only. Discounts represent the percentage saving on the cover price. Digital only access available for $59 p/a. Offer valid for new subscriptions and renewals of existing subscriptions. If you have a current print subscription, you are entitled to free digital access. Please email subscriptions@wheelsmedia.com.au or phone our support team to request a login and password.


4X4 AUSTRALIA
EASTER ESCAPADES
FJ
RETRO CRUISER
THIS PLUS THIS
4x4.whichcar.com.au
whichcar - Subscribe
4X4_February_2022
PAGES
ISSUES
VIEW ARTICLES
Browse by year
2022
2021
2020
2019
2018
2017
2016
2015
Issue September 23
Issue August 23
Issue July 23
Issue June 23
Issue May 23
Issue April 23
Issue March 23
Issue February 23
Issue January 23



TOP COVERAGE

THIS TOP-QUALITY AWNING PROVIDES PLENTY OF COVERAGE AND PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS

WORDS AND PHOTOS **MARK ALLEN**

BACKTRACK a couple of years while I was building my 4x4-converted Toyota HiAce. The addition of a decent awning was a 'must-have' item on my long wishlist of accessories – not only for rain protection but also for sun, wind and privacy. Given the rear-opening tailgate of the HiAce, and not wanting to fit an awning too high above the roof line, that ruled out a 270-degree awning that would wrap around the rear of the van, so instead I opted for a 180-degree model.

Bush Company gear, which is of South African origin, has been available in Australia for some time and has earned a great reputation for quality, form and function, so I opted to fit a 180 XT Max awning.

Given the lack of heavy-duty mounting options on my pop-top HiAce, I fitted a set of custom fabricated brackets to handle the weight of the awning. No, you can't buy these, and no, I don't have the plans for them, so I won't make a set for you, but given the standard fitment for most 4x4 applications, the included brackets will be strong enough for most people's needs.

Most awnings consist of three components, and if any of those parts fail, the awning is most likely a bin job, so I wasn't prepared to fit a substandard one.

The first component is the canvas; The Bush Company utilises a 313gsm polycotton ripstop material in its traditional olive-green colour. It's a personal choice, but I'd go for a light grey colour, if possible, over the green. Aside from that, the workmanship is excellent, and all stress points have been reinforced to ensure longevity at chafing, rubbing and wear points. The same material is used for the additional walls, which Velcro into position via a 50mm strip sewn under the awning's valance.

The frame is the part that will see bin day sooner rather than later if inferior materials and design are used. Given our couple of years' worth of use, along with a few high-wind campsites that have required the use of both poles and guy ropes, I can report no problems with the extruded alloy arms, the stainless-steel hinges, the gusseting system of the trussed arms, or the alloy backboard.

The protective travel bag, with included YKK zips, has proven to be large enough to pack the awning away easily and it doesn't flap when driving at speed. My

LONG TEST

Quick and easy to set up, The Bush Company 180 XT Max awning has proven itself over two years of travel.

only gripe with the 45gsm tonneau-style fabric is that it holds dust rather than an impervious PVC-style material that would wash off easier. Besides personal looks, the cover has maintained its waterproofness, and the quality zippers allow easy usage without jumping a tooth or jamming.

FREE STANDING?

THE misnomer that awnings should be strong enough to hold their own weight and be freestanding is somewhat misguided. Yes, the framework, attachment brackets and design should be able to hold the awning arms and material weights, but it's the uplifting wind that will do the most damage to any awning.

On a calm to mildly breezy day, The Bush Company awning reveals its freestanding ability. Perhaps I am erring on the side of caution, but once the wind picks up and the parachute-like awning is out ready to catch the wind, I always peg a few guy ropes down to ensure the whole shebang doesn't flip over the HiAce's roof. Holding the awning down is more important than supporting it or holding it up.

I opted for a pair of side walls; not enough to totally enclose to act as a room, but enough to block most weather elements, plus provide some privacy. Each wall can be positioned anywhere on the sewn-in Velcro strip on the awning, so we adjust the wall position as needed.

Packing the awning away requires a sequence to be adhered to, to allow the four arms to fold inwards on themselves without fouling, but once learned, its an easy job. Once packed, the bundle measures just 2.3m long, while when set up, it has a coverage of just over 8.5m². It's not as large as a 270° awning, but The Bush Company offers those if required. The overall length when set up is 5.58m, which I've positioned to start near the van's front doors and end at the corner of the rear tailgate when it's in the open position. Besides the small gap between the awning and the tailgate, this returns a 270° coverage. 4X4

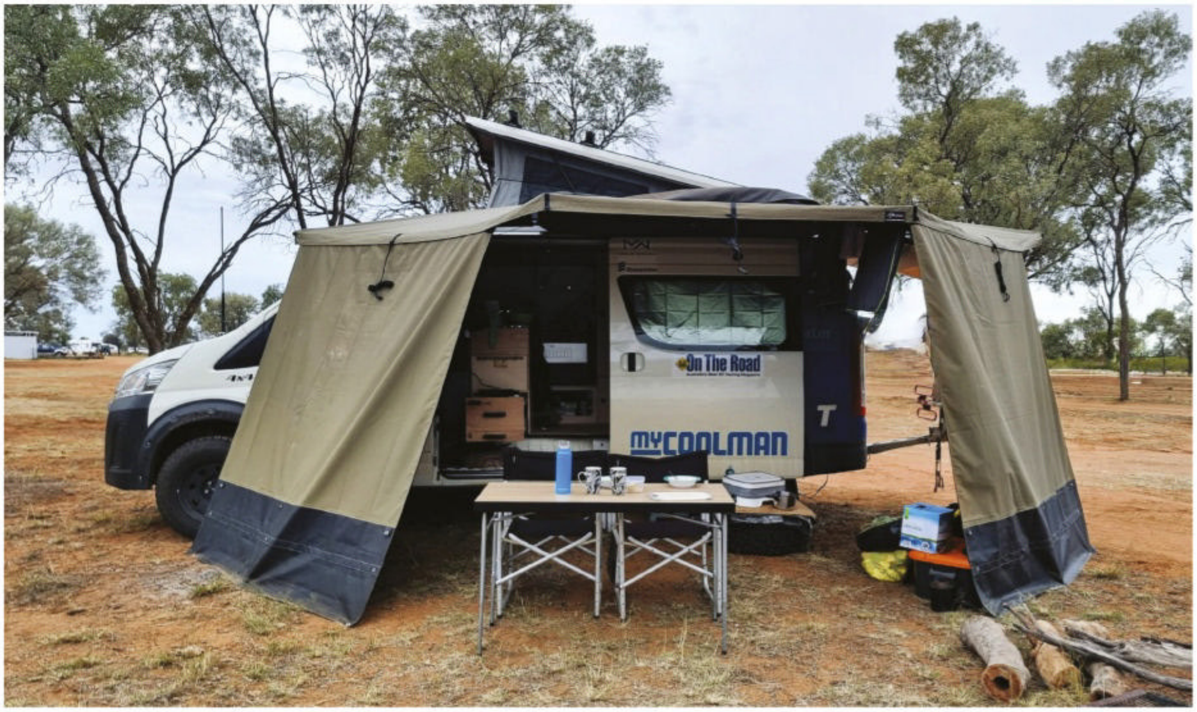
SIMPLE USE
Set up and pack away is quick and easy.

RATED

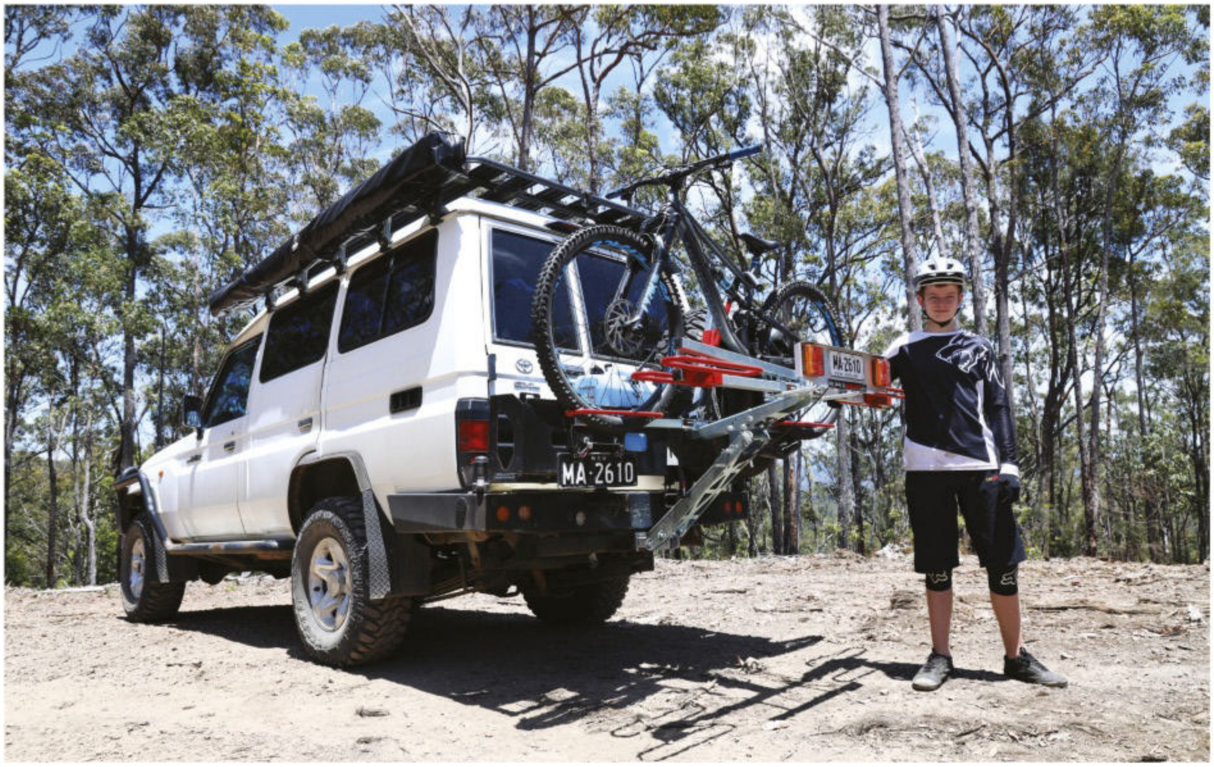
RRP: $2100 (awning); **$445** (canvas walls); **$590** (canvas walls with mesh window inserts)

AVAILABLE FROM: www.thebushcompany.com.au

WE SAY: A top quality 180° freestanding awning that will stand the test of time and provide excellent coverage from the elements.



ADD A WALL
We opted for a pair of walls that can be repositioned as needed.



EASY FIT
No way will the bike hit the deck, but it is easy enough to fit and remove.

GET A GRIP ... SPORT

AFTER YEARS OF PLAYING TETRIS TO FIT MULTIPLE BIKES ON A 4X4, DAMAGING BIKES ON THE RACK, AND SCRAPING THEM ON THE TRACKS WHILE DRIVING OFF ROAD, MARK ALLEN HAS FOUND A BETTER WAY

WORDS AND PHOTOS MARK ALLEN

GRIPSPORT manufactures several heavy-duty bike-rack designs right here in Australia … and I don't use the word 'heavy-duty' as a blasé way to describe these racks. No siree; these racks are rated to carry bikes on and off the road, regardless of terrain. Some bike-rack manufacturers make claims regarding the weight of the bikes they can carry, but decrease said weight when driving off road, or even state 'not for off-road use'. Not GripSport; this company's racks have been designed to carry bikes in all terrain types.

I've been using the GS4+ rack for the past couple of years on a number of 4x4s; it is essentially GripSport's top-of-the-range vehicle-mounted rack that also incorporates tail-lights (brake and turn indicators) and a number plate. Initially, I needed a robust off-road compatible rack for up to four bikes to fit on my Troopy, which had a rear-mounted swing-out spare wheel and dual jerry can holder. To make my wish-list harder, I wanted a rack that could transform from a four-bike to a two-bike carrier with my 4x4 converted HiAce. Plus, asking the ridiculous, I wanted the bike carrier to drop or pivot down to aid access to the rear of the Troopy and the HiAce.

While converting from four to two carriers takes 15 to 20 minutes, it's relatively straightforward and saves purchasing two separate carriers. The tilting system remains in both configurations, the light and number-plate holder are retained, and the simple hoop wheel mounts are all adjustable to suit whatever wheelbase bikes are carried.

Given the GripSport rack's upswept angle, my 4x4's departure angle isn't impeded so there is little chance of scraping bikes or the rack on the ground.

This rack can handle up to four bikes at 30kg each. Whether you're pedalling heavy electric mountain bikes, fat-wheeled off-road bikes, or any other weighty set of wheels, the dynamic load rating makes it possible to transport them.

I opted for the standard hoop set to hold the bike wheels over the Taco kit, which does indeed look like a taco shell. While the Taco version caters to varied frame-length bikes to be fitted without adjustments, making putting different bikes on the same holder easier, the hoop design was my preferred option because once adjusted to each bike's dimensions, the hoop does a better job of holding the bike in place, which is more suited to off-road conditions

Downsides? Yes, there are a couple. Smaller kids will need help lifting and reaching the bikes due to the high-mounting positions. Being manufactured from steel rather than alloy, the rack is heavy compared to lesser units. I can remove and install the rack by myself, but having two people makes the job much easier given the rack's overall weight. While alloy offers weight benefits, the galvanised steel set-up of the GripSport rack is stronger.

I have used used the GripSport rack with two bikes over a 10,000km trip through the Flinders Ranges and Central Australia on my 4x4 HiAce, on my Troopy with four bikes on countless weekend escapes, plus on my HiLux about a dozen times. Throughout, it has performed faultlessly and has always maintained its ease of use. Dare I mention this in a 4x4 magazine, but I also fitted the rack to a Commodore wagon a couple of times, proving how versatile the system is.

The GS4+ rack is a horizontal-style system that carries the bikes upright, but there is also a series of vertical bike racks if that is your preferred method.

Overall, the GripSport bike carrier system has exceeded my expectations and it has endured some seriously corrugated and rough country.

ADJUSTABLE The hoops are easily adjusted to suit the bike's wheelbase.

RATED

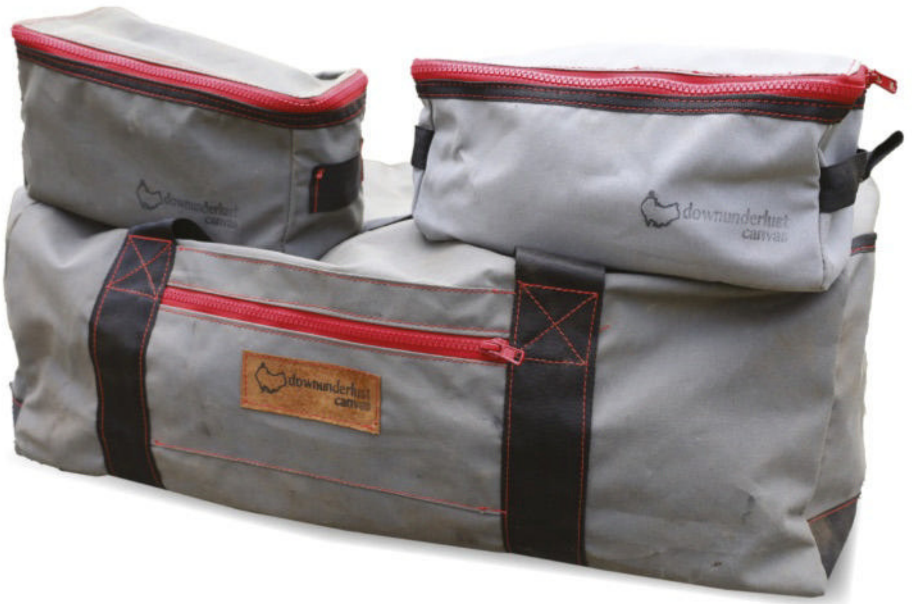
RRP: $1590 (includes light assembly)

AVAILABLE FROM: www.gripsport.com.au

WE SAY: GripSport offers rack systems for trailers and caravans, along with a multitude of accessories for a wide range of vehicle fitting scenarios, making its system applicable to most people's needs.

THE GS4+ RACK IS A HORIZONTAL-STYLE SYSTEM THAT CARRIES THE BIKES UPRIGHT

HIGH RIDER Bikes sit nice and high.



SECOND LIFE

DOWNUNDERLUST'S RANGE OF QUALITY AUSSIE-MADE PRODUCTS IS CONSTRUCTED USING RECYCLED CANVAS

WORDS AND PHOTOS KEV SMITH

IT'S no longer easy to find Aussie-made products that are built to handle our harsh conditions, which can be a challenge for a bloke like me who wants to know the products I buy for my year-round travels won't expire before I do.

While travelling through the Kimberley region I recently discovered the brand Downunderlust Canvas and its range of handmade bags and accessories.

Downunderlust Canvas founders Kimm and Matt have an extensive four-wheel driving and camping background, and they saw the need for custom products while travelling on the road many years ago. Starting with a little sewing machine to make their own bags in Broome, their friends soon saw how great the products were and began asking for their own. Roll on to today and they are now sending custom orders all over Australia.

Based in the remote Kimberley region, Downunderlust Canvas is a small Australian-owned and operated company that specialises in recycling old canvas products in to useful bags, pouches and more. Kimm and Matt source old swags and canvas material offcuts either online or locally to make their range of products. As well as the gear available on their online shop they accept custom orders. Kimm sewed up a large duffel bag for me, as well as some smaller bags to use while touring, and I can definitely say these things are as tough as nails.

The second-hand canvas is washed and dried prior to being used and while some of it may retain some marks and blemishes from its previous life, I reckon that gives it a fascinating backstory.

The straps are made from new seat-belt-style webbing material as these components can be the first to degrade in Australia's harsh climate. The larger duffel bags have flaps that fold over the zips for added protection and so far I have had no water or dust get into any of my bags while travelling.

As they are not mass produced, every product is unique; when ordering a custom-made bag you can request contrast stitching, a zip upgrade or even a custom colour depending on what canvas is on hand at the time of manufacture.

I discovered Downunderlust Canvas at Mount Barnett Roadhouse on the Gibb River Road, where Matt and Kimm are managing the operation. Here you'll find a range of bags in different configurations for sale, or you can order custom-made bags.

RATED

RRP: $35 Small Storage Bag; $50 Regular Storage Bag; $65 Firewood Carrier; $165 Duffel Bag

AVAILABLE FROM: downunderlustcanvas.com.au

WE SAY: Top quality Aussie-made products made with sustainable second-hand canvas.

GEAR FOR ANY ADVENTURE

- POWER
- ELECTRICAL
- LIGHTING
- RECOVERY
- TOURING & CAMPING
- CARGO MANAGEMENT
- VEHICLE PROTECTION
- UNDERBODY

HULK 4X4

HULK4X4.com.au

Scan the QR code to Shop Now or find your local HULK 4X4 distributor

Endless Air

Need Air? Inflate a flat tyre in 55 seconds!

Endless compressed air up to 120 psi, at a massive 10 cuft/min, is now available from the engine in your 4x4, tractor, truck, boat, or trades ute.

Work anywhere your petrol, diesel or LPG engine does!

- Belt driven from your engine using proven auto air conditioner technology
- Extremely strong, versatile, and cost effective
- Designed to run from fan belt (clutch operated from dash)
- No power loss or increased fuel consumption when not in use
- Draws minimal power when operating
- Pump up a flat car tyre in 25 seconds
- Fill 4x4 tyre in 55 seconds
- Top up your tyres after sand driving in just 25 seconds.
- Bracket kits available for most 4WD's

"The **Endless Air™ compressor** is arguably the most discussed and copied compressor on the market, making it an ideal inclusion for our test. Fast compact and simple to install, this compressor is the ultimate in on-board air systems".
— 2014 industry test

Our compressor not only came out of this rigorous test as recommended, but the

FASTEST!

Use your Endless Air™ to run air operated diff-locks, air tools, spray guns, impact wrenches, inflatable boats, nail guns or air beds!

from **$595** inc gst

www.endlessair.com.au

Call now for further information or brochure Ph (03) 9584 4785

Kareela Engineering 2 Tamar Court, Mentone VIC 3194 email: john.endlessair@gmail.com

THIS MONTH WE TALK TO

FLASH LUBE

DESCRIBE YOUR BUSINESS…

Flashlube is a fuel solution brand that combines additives for diesel, petrol, gas, oil, grease, cooling, and the braking system, with hardware such as kits to dispense the additives, filter the fuel and Catch Can solutions to solve the challenges vehicles face around the world.

Developed and mostly made at Head Office in Australia, then distributed through our 9 international warehouses worldwide, assisting many of the challenges being seen as regulations ask more and more of the vehicle's fuel systems.

TELL US SOME OF THE HISTORY OF THE COMPANY…

It has an interesting history, beginning in the 1980s. A German immigrant, Wolfgang Kluenner was working as a Scientist for the CSIRO in Melbourne. He had purchased a vehicle that was converted to LPG and in a short time, he noticed that the valves and valve heads had receded, causing expensive replacement costs.

An incredibly smart man, he invented the original Flashlube Valve Saver Fluid and Kit, which drip fed the fluid into the inlet manifold, then vaporising and coating the valves & valve seats to protect them. Nothing similar existed before this time and the ability to develop a fluid that would vaporise, follow the air stream and effectively coat a metal part was remarkable.

From this invention Flashlube Pty Ltd was formed in 1994, which has since taken Flashlube to be sold by distributors in over 80 countries around the world. A wonderful Australian success story.

Flash Lube
DIESEL
Flash Lube
FLUID
Flash Lube
INJECTOR
CLEANER

WHERE IS THE COMPANY AT NOW?

Flashlube has developed many solutions since the original invention, and this has led to a network in Europe, Africa, Oceana, South American and North America. Head Office remains in Melbourne, but each market has a different mix of fuel, weather, and driving conditions which contribute to different challenges, so many different solutions have been developed to solve each of these.

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT YOUR PRODUCT?

That they are actually invented by Flashlube. There was no LPG additive before Flashlube. For example, and now there is a complete industry of these. We would suggest there was no prefilter before Flashlube, or even really a filter-based Catch Can, but now these products are sold in every auto store. By creating our own solutions, we have not only grown strongly as a company but also grown new markets for others.

WHAT ARE TWO WORDS TO DESCRIBE YOUR PRODUCT/SERVICE?

Unique inventions.

WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM YOUR COMPETITION?

There are additive companies around the world and, separately, there are filter companies. These take totally different core competencies to create. Flashlube are the only company that combine both hardware and additive development to produce a truly unique range. It can be tough - chemistry with engineering often don't mix but by really listening to the customer, observing and understanding their challenges, we are able to get all the right people in the room to solve them.

We are large enough to be able to afford to do this but, also as a Family Business, we can be agile enough to do so before most of the world realises there is a problem.

Being from Australia also means we are a long way from the rest of the world, forcing us to think for ourselves, reducing group think and leading to unique results, just like Wolfgang all those year ago.

WHAT PRODUCTS ARE YOU DEVELOPING NOW?

DPFs on Diesels are a real challenge for the industry. Being able to relaunch Flashlube Diesel Conditioner for a new solution is something we successfully did many years ago and is in need again today more than ever, to delay the DPF blocking and need to regenerate.

WHO USES YOUR PRODUCTS?

Those who realise how much we ask from our vehicles, and that preventative maintenance is far cheaper than fixing the issue after it has occurred. Those that love their car.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

Helping over a million vehicles convert from leaded to unleaded fuel safely, with Flashlube Valve Saver Fluid, was incredibly satisfying from an environmental perspective. At the time, leaded cars made up 8% of Australia's total car parc.

FLASHLUBE BRAKE FLUID
BRAKE FLUID DOT 4
BRAKE FLUID DOT 3
Genuine Flash Lube

FLASHLUBE RADIATOR COOLANTS
RADIATOR COOLANT
RADIATOR COOLANT
DISTILLED WATER
flashlube.com
Genuine Flash Lube
Call 1300 888 444

FLASHLUBE DIESEL CONDITIONER
DIESEL CONDITIONER
flashlube.com
Genuine Flash Lube

FLASHLUBE HIGH TEMP GREASE
HIGH TEMPERATURE GREASE
flashlube.com
Genuine Flash Lube

FLASHLUBE MOLY GREASE
MOLY GREASE
flashlube.com
Genuine Flash Lube

PROMOTE YOUR AUSTRALIAN MADE PRODUCTS HERE
0410 221 434
Scott Crowley Sales Director 4x4 Australia
E Scott.Crowley@4x4media.com.au

Promote *your* Australian-made products here

ASK US NOW

Scott Crowley
Sales Director
E. scott.crowley@4x4media.com.au
M. 0410 221 434

GEAR

PRODUCT TESTS & NEW STUFF

ARB ZENITH BUMPER

ARB's new Zenith bumper has been designed to optimise off-road performance, featuring a sleeker profile, integrated bash plate, recovery points and an aggressive front-end look.

The Zenith has been extensively tested for extreme off-road conditions and has been designed to be compatible with modern vehicle systems, including SRS airbags, parking sensors, front cameras and radar integration.

Key features include steel construction, integrated eight-tonne forged recovery points and a steel winch cradle to accommodate a variety of winches. The bar also features integrated lighting options, and its design improves approach angles and clearance. Finishes include a durable powder coat, and it can be colour-coded to match the vehicle.

RRP: TBA

WEBSITE: www.arb.com.au

HULK 4X4 WINCH RANGE

HULK 4x4 has launched a new range of high-performance GENESIS recovery winches designed for off-road enthusiasts. Available in 9500lb and 12,500lb capacities, these winches combine lightweight alloy construction with rugged durability. Key features include an IP68 water and dust rating; a 7.2hp motor; a fully clock-able gearbox and motor; a knurled drum for better rope grip; and multiple control-box mounting options. Both wired and wireless remotes are included. The GENESIS also comes with a limited lifetime mechanical warranty and a seven-year electrical warranty.

RRP: $1333.85 (12,500lb)

WEBSITE: www.hulk4x4.com.au

GENESIS
HULK
4X4
GENESIS
9500

CSA-X RAZORBACK WHEEL

The aggressive-looking CSA-X Razorback is built to withstand tough terrain, featuring a rugged split six-spoke design with detailed contours. Offered in 17x9 and 18x9 sizes, the Razorback comes in two premium finishes: Satin Black and Satin Graphite with a black lip.

The wheel has a 1250kg load rating, making it ideal for both commercial and off-road applications, and for vehicles with GVM upgrades. It's compatible with a wide range of six-stud vehicles, and its baked enamel paint finish is resistant to salt spray, etching and wear.

RRP: POA

WEBSITE: csawheels.com.au

CSA
OFFROAD

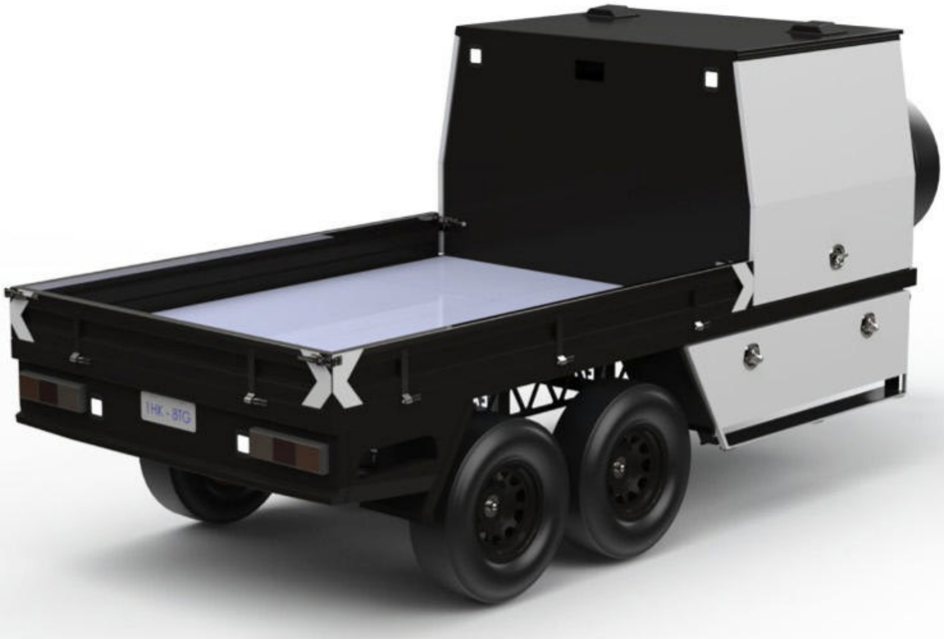
EXPEDITION HAULER

Made in Western Australia, the Expedition Hauler is a heavy-duty trailer designed to handle extreme loads and rough terrain. It features a hybrid steel and aluminium construction for maximum durability without excess weight.

Available in 3.5T and 4.5T configurations, the trailer's hubs and wheel tracks are custom-matched to your tow vehicle. Various tray designs are available to suit work, off-roading or general use. Additional storage options include canopies, under-tray boxes, and fuel and water tanks. The company says there are limited build slots available for 2025.

RRP: POA

WEBSITE: expeditionsystems.com.au



IRONMAN APEX BULLBAR FOR TOYOTA HILUX

Available now to pre-order at Ironman 4x4 dealers, the Apex bullbar for the Toyota HiLux is made from high-strength steel with a tough powder-coated finish. The bar features a chassis-mounted steel winch cradle, integrated five-tonne recovery points, and provision for up to six cube lights.

Designed to integrate with the HiLux's safety features, the bar also includes mounting provisions for driving lights and a UHF antenna. The 60.3mm steel tubing ensures strength and reliability, while the winch cradle allows for easy winch installation.

RRP: TBA WEBSITE: www.ironman4x4.com.au

ST JOHNS OFF-ROAD FIRST-AID KIT

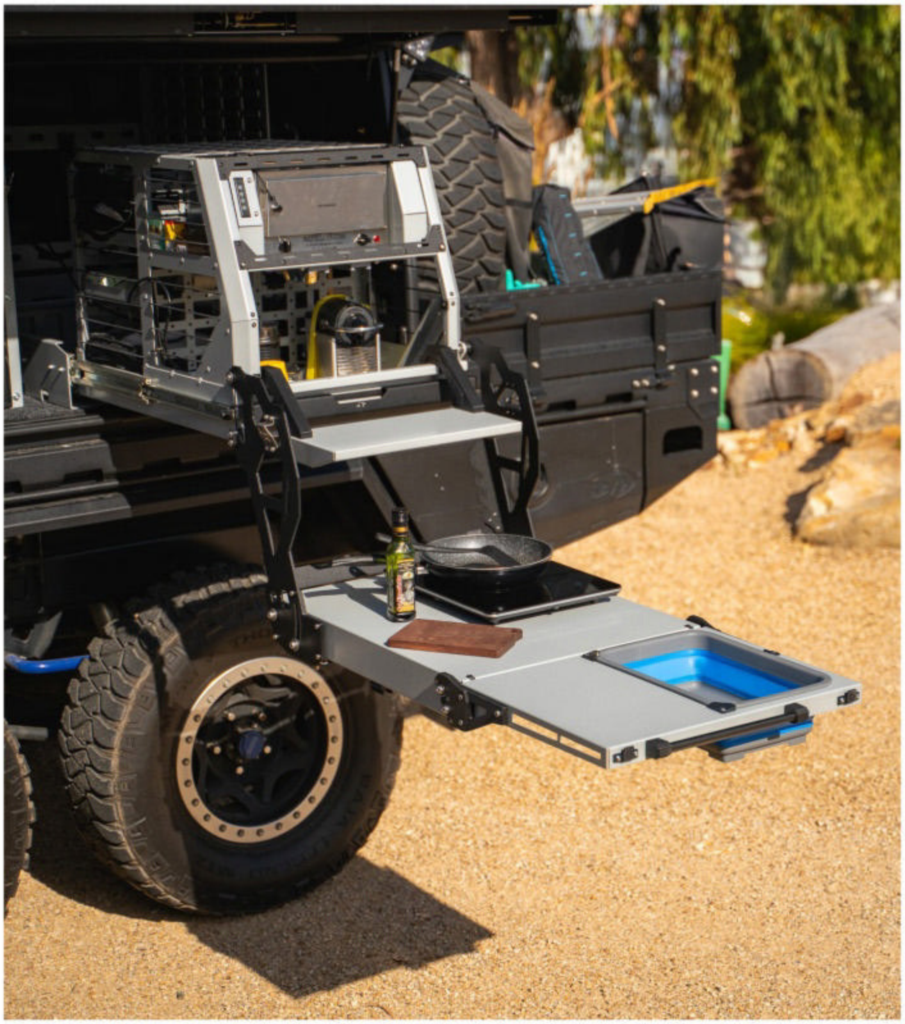
A first-aid kit is essential when embarking on an off-road adventure, and St Johns has a kit packed with all of the equipment you'll need. The Off-Road First Aid Kit in Waist Bag is designed to keep you prepared for emergencies. Lightweight, durable and portable – it weighs just 1.56kg – it contains 125 pieces, making it perfect for use in 4x4s.

The kit is designed for quick access, ensuring you have all the essential supplies to handle a variety of emergencies. The kit can be strapped to your waist for easy access, and the adjustable belt ensures a comfy fit. The kit is ARTG-registered, so it meets Australian standards. The dimensions of the kit are 390mm x 210mm x 160mm, so it can easily be stored in a vehicle.

RRP $141.95

WEBSITE: shop.stjohn.org.au

Off-Road First Aid Kit In Waist Bag
Proceeds support local communities
Off-Road First Aid Kit
In Waist Bag
St John
For first aid training and products
CALL 1300 360 455 | www.stjohn.org.au



BOSS OVERLANDER PANTRY/ KITCHEN

The Boss Overlander Pantry/Kitchen is an all-in-one cooking and storage solution. Constructed from premium aluminium and featuring modular functionality, it includes adjustable shelving, a flip-over table and integrated sink. It also includes a Travel Buddy 12V marine oven, integrated tri-colour LED lighting with a dimmer for optimal visibility, and prewired connections to an Anderson plug for easy 12V system integration.

Additional features include coffee pod holders, a Molle panel for extra storage, and built-in bottle openers. With a 4mm aluminium frame and 3D-printed carbon-fibre parts, the pantry/kitchen is both durable and lightweight.

RRP: $4480
WEBSITE: www.bossaluminium.com.au

TOYOTA
SCAVENGER
1IBR 011

SCAVENGER SNORKELS

The Scavenger Snorkels range of snorkels feature cyclonic separators that remove more than 95 per cent of dust before it reaches the airbox. The system essentially spins dust particles out of the air, expelling them beneath the vehicle to prevent engine damage.

The snorkels also use a high-quality filter from Freudenberg, designed to capture very fine particles to ensure only clean air enters the engine. The filters are durable and fit securely into the factory airbox with a dust-proof seal, preventing deflection under load. Scavenger Snorkels also says its snorkels are quieter than other snorkels on sale in Australia.

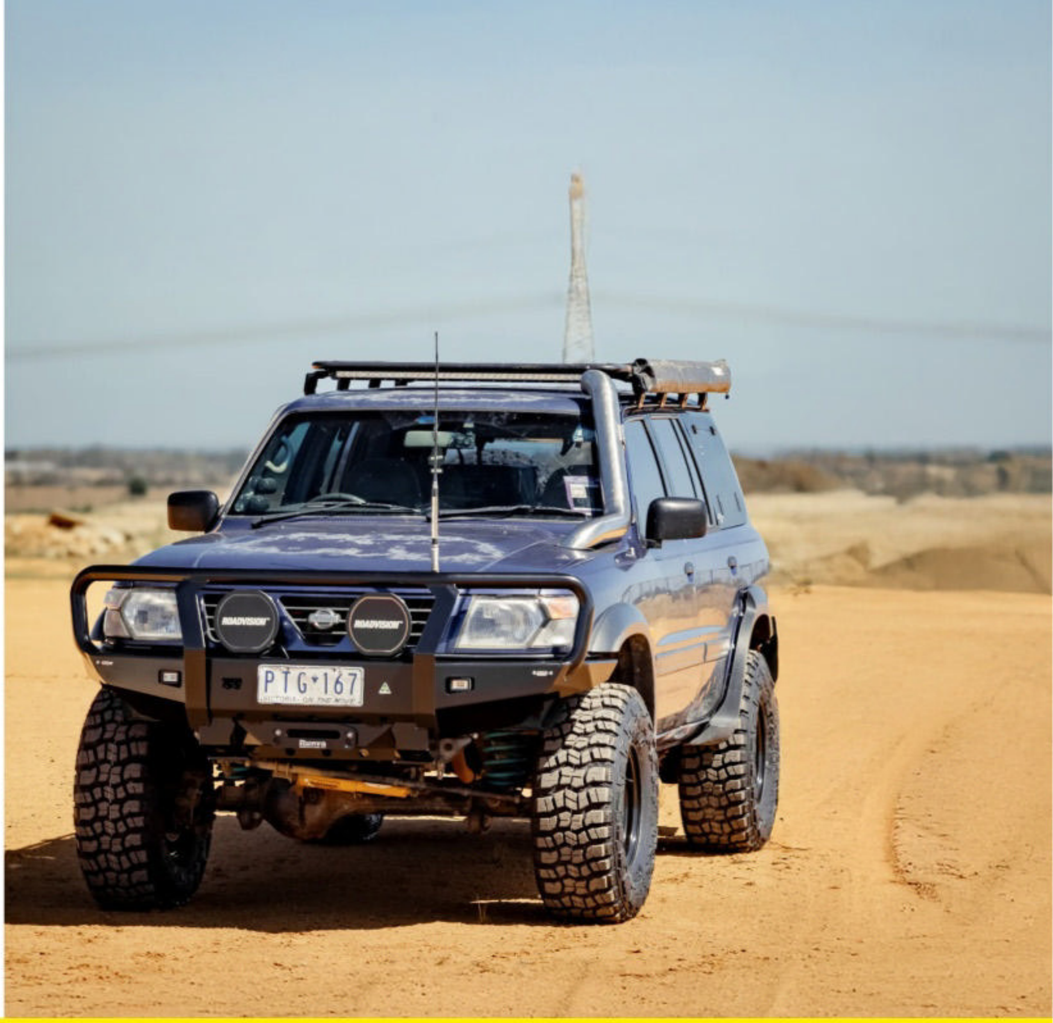
RRP: Systems start from $2100 (depending on model vehicle)
WEBSITE: www.scavengersnorkels.com

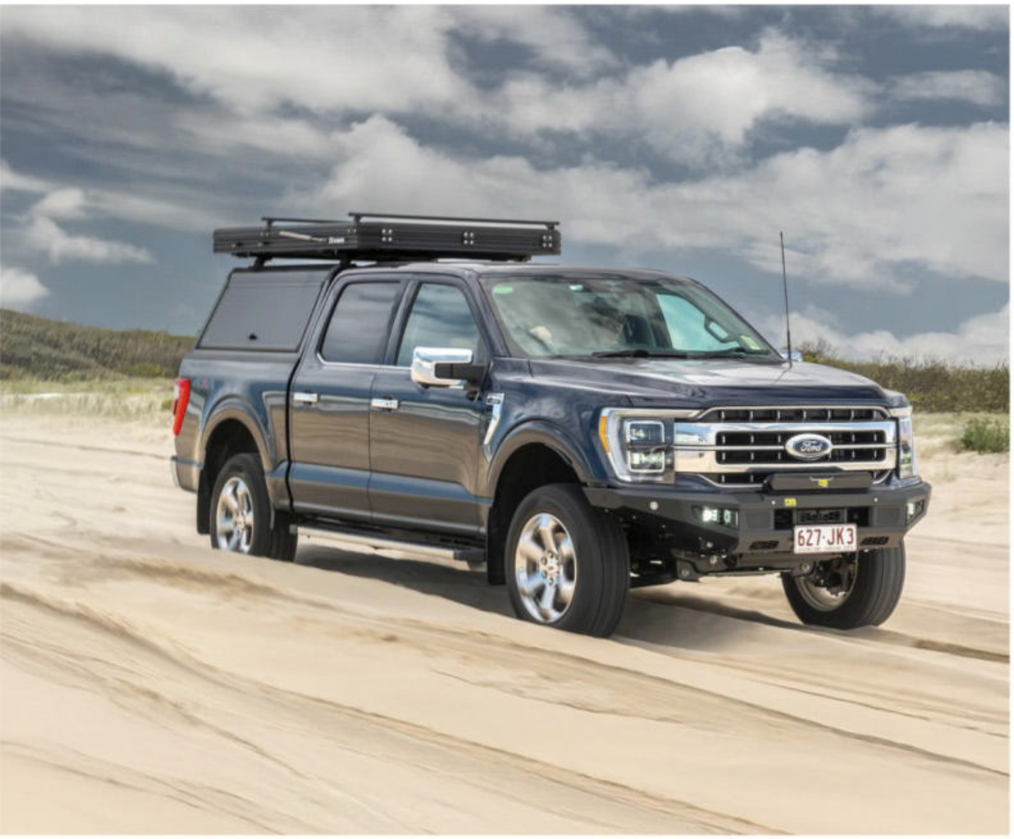
THE CRUISER COMPANY BULLBAR FOR NISSAN GU PATROL

The Cruiser Company (TCC) has released its S1-S3 GU Patrol bullbar, which is now available to order. Made in Australia, the bullbar is built with a 5mm steel construction and a 10mm mounting plate with an eyelet for added durability. The 60.3mm tube has a 3.9mm wall, ensuring strength, and the bar is made from a single piece for added stability. It weighs 65kg and is airbag-compliant.

The bullbar is low-mount-winch compatible and features RoadVision indicators and recessed accessory light slots. Plus, it has four antenna mounts and is compatible with nine-inch spotlights.

RRP: $3200 (satin black powder coat); $4190 (colour-coded)
WEBSITE: thecruisercompany.com.au



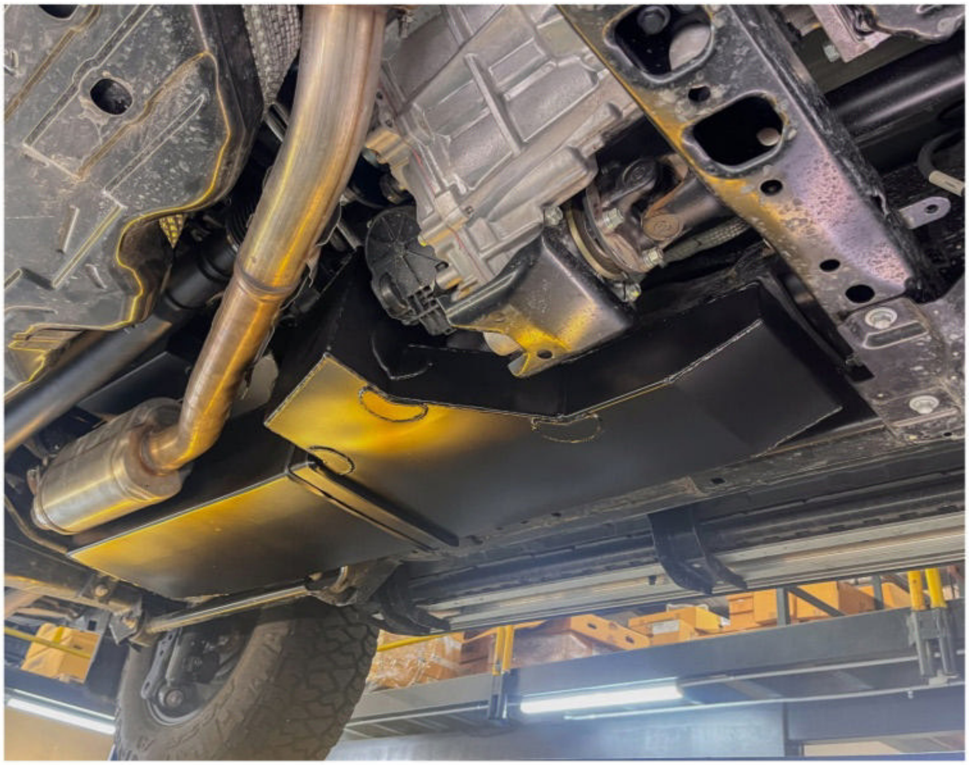


TJM VENTURER BAR FOR FORD F-150

The TJM Venturer Bar is now available for the Ford F-150. Made from matte-black textured steel with satin black grilles, this bar not only provides impact protection but enhances the front end of the F-150. It is ADR compliant and compatible with all OEM safety systems, ensuring it does not void the vehicle's warranty.

The bar is rated to support winches up to 12,000lb and is compatible with hawse fairlead winches. Optional 8000kg rated recovery points are available. The bar also includes mounting positions for off-road work lights and dual antenna mounts.

RRP: $2850
WEBSITE: www.tjm.com.au



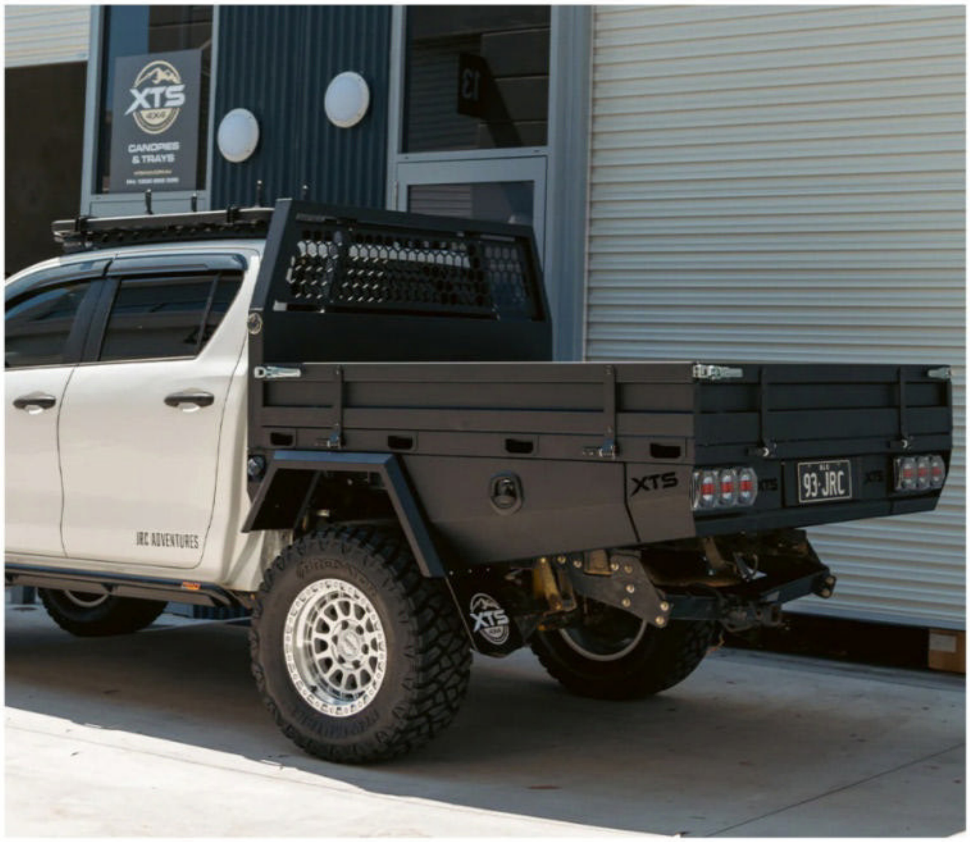
BROWN DAVIS 75L LONG-RANGE FUEL TANK FOR TOYOTA PRADO 250 SERIES

Brown Davis has released a new 75-litre long-range fuel tank for the Prado 250 Series, which increases the vehicle's total fuel capacity to 155 litres when combined with the existing 80-litre main tank. The tank simply replaces the existing 30-litre sub tank on the passenger side, resulting in a 40.9 per cent increase in range, allowing for more than 1980km of travel on a single fill.

The new tank also accommodates the AdBlue system and maintains the vehicle's structural integrity. Key features include a fast-fill breather, fuel sender unit flange, flush-mount drain plug, gusseted brackets, an internal baffling system, and a tapered approach angle. The tank is compatible with all 2.8L diesel models, including both five- and seven-seat variants.

RRP: $1397 (shop around)

WEBSITE: www.browndavis.com.au



XTS 4X4 1800 TRAY

The XTS 4X4 1800 is a heavy-duty tray designed to handle tough off-road conditions. The tray comes with a range of standard features including a mesh headboard (75mm), large rear trundle drawer, slide-out side lockers, mudguards, removable sides and a powder-coated finish available in matte or gloss. Additionally, it includes a fuel filler.

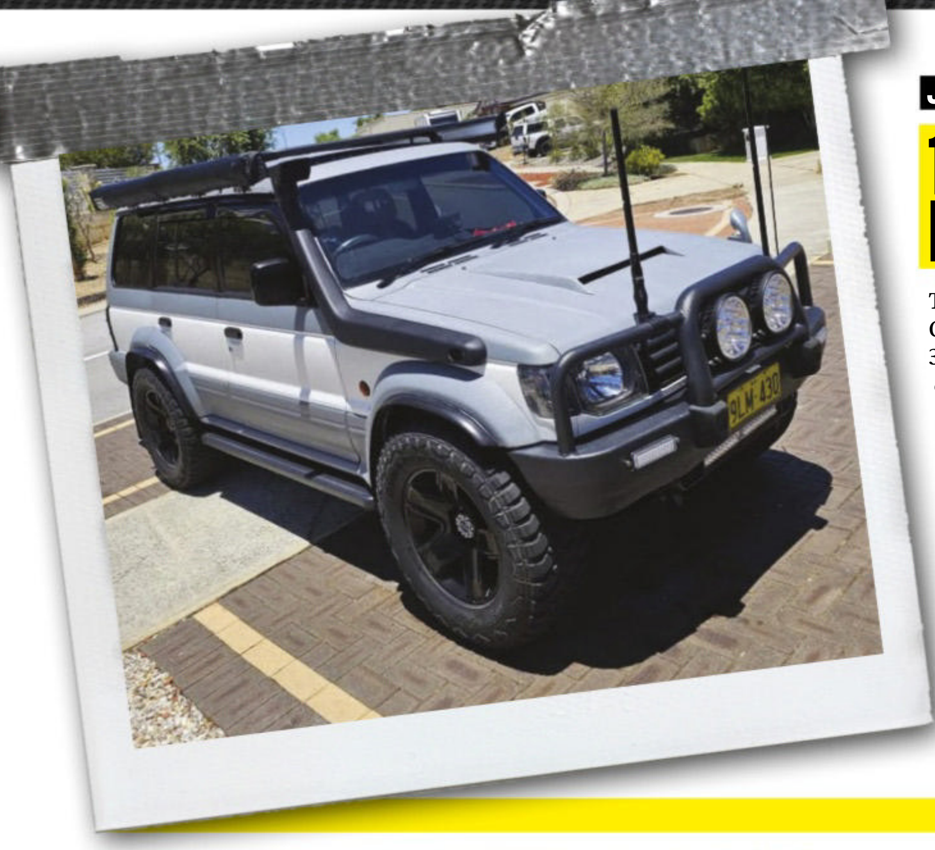
Optional extras include a vinyl wrap on the side lockers, a trundle drawer cover/table ($300 extra) and a 50L water tank with a 12V pump installed in the headboard ($600 extra). The tray measures 1800mm (l) x 1840mm (w) x 860mm (h).

RRP: $6990

WEBSITE: xts4x4.com.au

READERS RIGS

WANT TO SEE YOUR 4x4 PUBLISHED IN THE MAG? SEND US A PIC VIA OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!



JAMES BRAMWELL

1997 MITSUBISHI PAJERO GLS

This old Gen 2 Pajero has a long list of mods: Genie extractors; 2.5-inch exhaust; 18-inch wheels; 325/60R18 mud terrains (basically 34s); Raptor-coated in factory colours including door jambs; raptor-coated black bullbar, side steps and roof rack; rear airbags with compressor and air tank on top of drawers; four-inch lift; Tough Dog front/rear shocks; Tough Dog steering damper; urethane bushes; front Lokka; front/rear LED spotlights; front light bar; rock lights; roof rack, awning and annexe; new headlights, tail lights and indicators; Oricom dual-antenna; bonnet scoop; dual battery; snorkel; Kings drawers; 5000W inverter; custom stereo with three 10-inch subs and Kenwood head unit; and 20 per cent tint all around.

STEVEN SMITH

2013 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER VX

This photo was taken at Cable Beach in Broome. I bought it four years ago. It's now a two-seater with a bed, Engel fridge, storage and cooking equipment for long road trips. I've recently returned from a four-month adventure to tropical Queensland and the eastern states (before summer got too hot) and I'm now back home in Perth. The best destination is the Gibb River Road in the Kimberley.

KIM HOUSEGO

2013 FORD RANGER XLS

I purchased it in 2016 with 50,000 hard kilometres done by the previous owner (but no mods or accessories fitted). I fitted the bullbar, winch, snorkel, canopy, drawers, fridge, second battery, water tank with pump, flares, and made the roof racks myself. I also had a 50mm suspension kit fitted. We took it to Cape York in 2017 and have done quite a few local Tassie tracks including Climies. Yes, I took it up the waterfall crossing. It has been used to tow our 2.5-tonne caravan, car trailers loaded with Patrols, and lots more. Untouched so far, apart from replacing one intercooler hose.

JED REACHER

2004 LAND ROVER DISCOVERY IIA

It’s the Disco II powered by the TD5 (the final update version of the Discovery II). Mods include billet hybrid turbo and ceramic-coated turbo housing and exhaust manifold; four-inch lift with Fox shocks and Dobinson springs; and cranked Watt’s linkage. The wheel arches were chopped to fit 33-inch tyres, and then hand-moulded flares were built by myself to make it look factory. My favourite camp spot is the Bendelby Ranges.

CAMERON NEWLING

INEOS GRENADIER TRIALMASTER

I reckon this is the most modified Grenadier Trialmaster in the country. I have recently done a Flinders Ranges and Simpson Desert crossing including the Oodnadatta Track, and also the west coast of Tassie, among other trips. Factory options include dual batteries, winch, roo bar, rock sliders, leather seats and a rear table. Mods include 305/70R17 Maxxis RAZRs; Speedy Outlaw wheels; Eibach 40mm lift; King remote res shocks; Custom Offroad bash plates; TCC rear bar; Offset tyre carrier; 12V fit-out with air compressor; UHF; Lightforce light bar and work lights; REDARC Tow-Pro; and ORS rear drawers. I plan to get a JMACX steering damper when they are released.

ZACHARY MONCK

GWM TANK 300

We take this away almost every other weekend and that is what it’s set up to do. It’s plenty capable on the sand and soft hill climbs around our area. We recently went camping on the beautiful Stream Beach and were lucky enough to have it to ourselves. We love the freedom this 4x4 gives us. Being cheaper than its competitors, it gave us the budget to buy new and build it the way we wanted to. We can’t fault it in any way – it has been reliable and continues to beat our expectations. It has a suite of luxury factory features such as heated/cooled seats, a driver’s seat massage function, ambient lighting and Napa leather seats. Equipped with factory diff locks front and rear and a range of driving modes, the places we wouldn’t be able to get to in the Tank are few and far between. It has a 2-inch Sandkat Suspension lift kit; AT tyres; ARB bullbar; Nacho lights; and a Tracklander roof rack with Outback Saffa 270 awning; and more.

2024 MITSUBISHI TRITON GLS

0000009 KM

DATE ACQUIRED: 2024
PRICE: $59,090
KM SINCE LAST UPDATE: 1547KM
AV FUEL: 8.0L/100KM

FINAL FAREWELL

IF THIS UTE'S A ROCKIN' ... ELLEN TAKES THE TRITON TO A MUSIC FESTIVAL FOR A WEEKEND ESCAPE

WORDS & PHOTOS **ELLEN DEWAR**

IT'S an early start Friday morning, throwing the swag, awning and camp chair in the tray, in readiness for a road trip down the coast.

As I roll to a stop on the freeway on-ramp the Triton's auto-stop engages, I lift the brake and there is a notable delay in the restart. I get the purpose of the auto-stop in urban environs, however, the Triton's a bit slow to fire up and that really isn't ideal for on-ramp scenarios where you need to brake, hold, brake and hold. This is why I usually opt to deactivate the stop-start system.

I'm heading to Lerderderg to meet the *4X4 Australia* crew to photograph a comparison test before venturing down the Great Ocean Road for a weekend of music and camping. Finally, I get out of town to stretch the Triton's legs, and mine to the sound of bands rocking.

The Triton has been a great workhorse, and makes for an excellent shooting platform for various photographic assignments, traipsing up, down and around many parts of Victoria with ease and confidence.

It's a stinking hot day, the GLS's rear seats are fully loaded with camera gear and fridge, the latter working hard to keep cool. A lack of rain has made the tracks very dusty and the tonneau doesn't keep dust out of the tray.

Finishing up the long work day, I wave goodbye and point the Triton towards the Great Ocean Road. With three-and-a-half hours to my destination, I get comfortable for the drive. I turn off the highway and the map sends me through the farm country of Winchelsea and Colac.

A light on the dash has been illuminated for at least a week now telling me 'AdBlue required in 2400km'. This reminder pops up every time I start the Triton and now it says 'AdBlue required in 1500km'. Rolling through Colac I spot a BP out the corner of my eye with AdBlue, so I fill it with 10 litres straight

from the bowser. Finally, one less beeping message.

The roads aren't the best and the Triton's ride is a little bouncy when lightly laden. With the adaptive cruise activated I approach a Toyota Kluger wandering around the road; someone needs a nap! The adaptive cruise control allows me just to stay back without having to apply the brakes.

Following the Kluger for 15 minutes with no overtaking available, I watch with horror as it takes a corner way too wide. I decide it's time to put some space between us; a long straight allows me to put my foot down and the Triton responds with decent acceleration. I wave the sleepy driver goodbye, watching in my rear view as the Kluger pulls over over moments later for a rest stop.

A gate just outside of Princetown covered in flags is my entry to a beautiful farm where the festival is taking place. The triton handles the rough farm tracks confidently, down into the valley, with views down to Princetown, the closest town to the 12 Apostles.

I pull up next to my mates who have set up early, and strategically park the Triton where it will shade my swag the following morning. The weekend is going to be hot.

Outdoor festivals are fun but having the right vehicle to get you in and out of paddocks and dusty tracks is beneficial, and the Triton is the perfect vehicle for this. In the morning we squeeze five people in the Triton and my passengers comment on the generous legroom, comfortable seating and the decent headrests, and the rear-ceiling ducts for the air-conditioning which blow cool air on the sweaty crew as we navigate dusty tracks down to the river for a morning swim, flotation devices stacked in the tray.

The only drawback of the rear air ducts is that there's no front control for the fan (at least none that I could see), so when I left the festival solo I couldn't easily switch it off, so you have to remind passengers to do so before exiting. If you're long-armed you might reach back to access the controls, but not I.

Covered in dust inside and out, the Triton and I avoid heading home too early by detouring via Barwon Heads to visit friends for one final night. It is pouring with rain and whilst it isn't the sunny afternoon I was hoping for, the sun pokes through the clouds the following morning allowing for a short swim and a look around town before cruising back to Melbourne for some reflection.

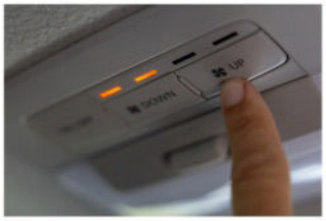
Utes really have become a popular choice thanks to their versatility – dual cab for the kids, tray for the odd jobs or trades, and enough payload capacity for holidays on which you want to take everything but the kitchen sink. While there are compromises in some areas with utes, the Triton GLS has proven itself to be a great all-rounder and it's certainly worth fair consideration if you are in the market for a new 4x4.

LIGHT LOAD
Plenty of space in the tray for work and play kit.

[redacted]

[redacted]

NAVIGATOR
Big screen with maps and music for the weekend.



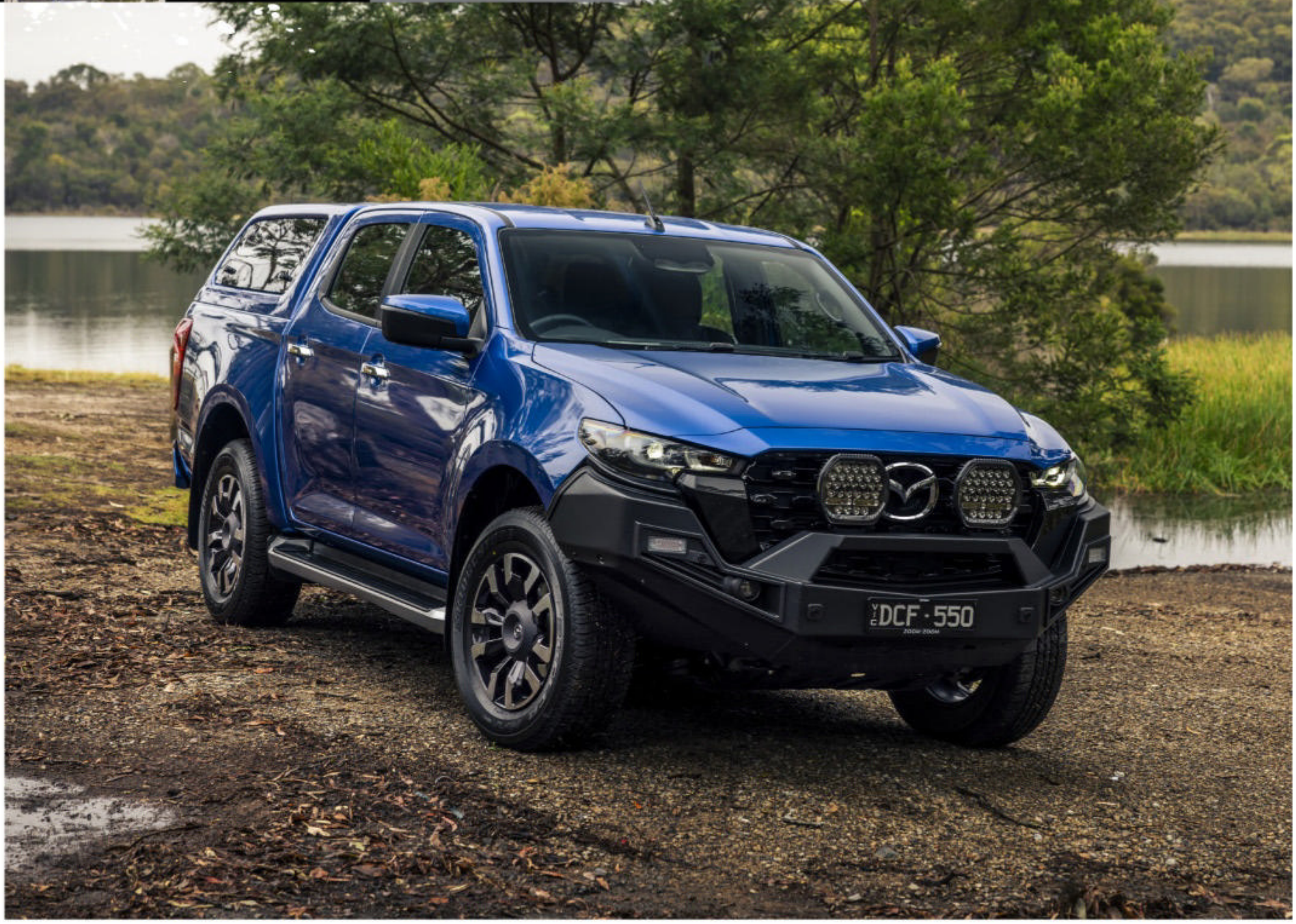
HOT TIMES
The slab-sided Triton provides some shade from the morning sun.

4X4 SHED

2025 MAZDA BT-50 GT

9 KM

DATE ACQUIRED: ???
PRICE: $66,170
KM SINCE LAST UPDATE: N/A
AV FUEL: N/A



BT-50 WITH THE LOT

WE'VE ADDED AN MADA BT-50 TO THE SHED AND LOADED IT UP WITH FACTORY-BACKED ACCESSORIES

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

MAZDA Australia has given it's BT-50 range of utes a midlife makeover for 2025 and we liked it so much on the launch drive, we've now added one to the 4X4 Shed.

The BT we've got is actually one of the cars for the launch where we were impressed by the range of quality accessories now offered by Mazda, so we've gone with one that has been suitably accessorised for our uses.

Our car is the GT-spec BT-50 that has an RRP of $66,170 and to that the team at Mazda has added almost $16K worth of factory-backed accessories some of which are from known and respected 4x4 aftermarket brands.

While the single-hoop steel front bumper is a product developed in Australia for Mazda, the driving lights mounted on it come from well-known brand Lightforce. In fact, they are Lightforce's premium 'Beast' LED lights that offer multiple beam patterns and exceptional performance.

Similarly, the colour-matched canopy is unbranded for Mazda, while the slide-out drawer system inside comes from USA-brand Decked and the seal-kit to keep dust out of the tray and drawers was also developed locally.

As the GT model, our BT comes very well-equipped with standard equipment

IMPRESSIVE With some $16K of accessories offered by Mazda, the BT-50 GT will be a head-turner wherever it goes.

including but not limited to black leather seats with eight-way power adjustment on the driver's seat and heating on both front seats; a blacked out interior; a 9-inch multimedia touchscreen with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto (wireless and USB); rear-seat air-con; remote engine start; front parking sensors; reversing camera and sensors; adaptive cruise control with stop-and-go; Emergency Lane Keeping with road-edge detection; Rear Cross Traffic Brake; LED headlights; satnav; TPMS; and 18-inch alloys.

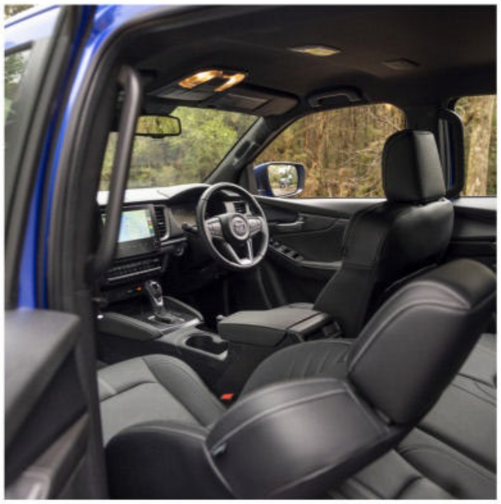
It's a fully-loaded package befitting the model that sits second from the top of the range.

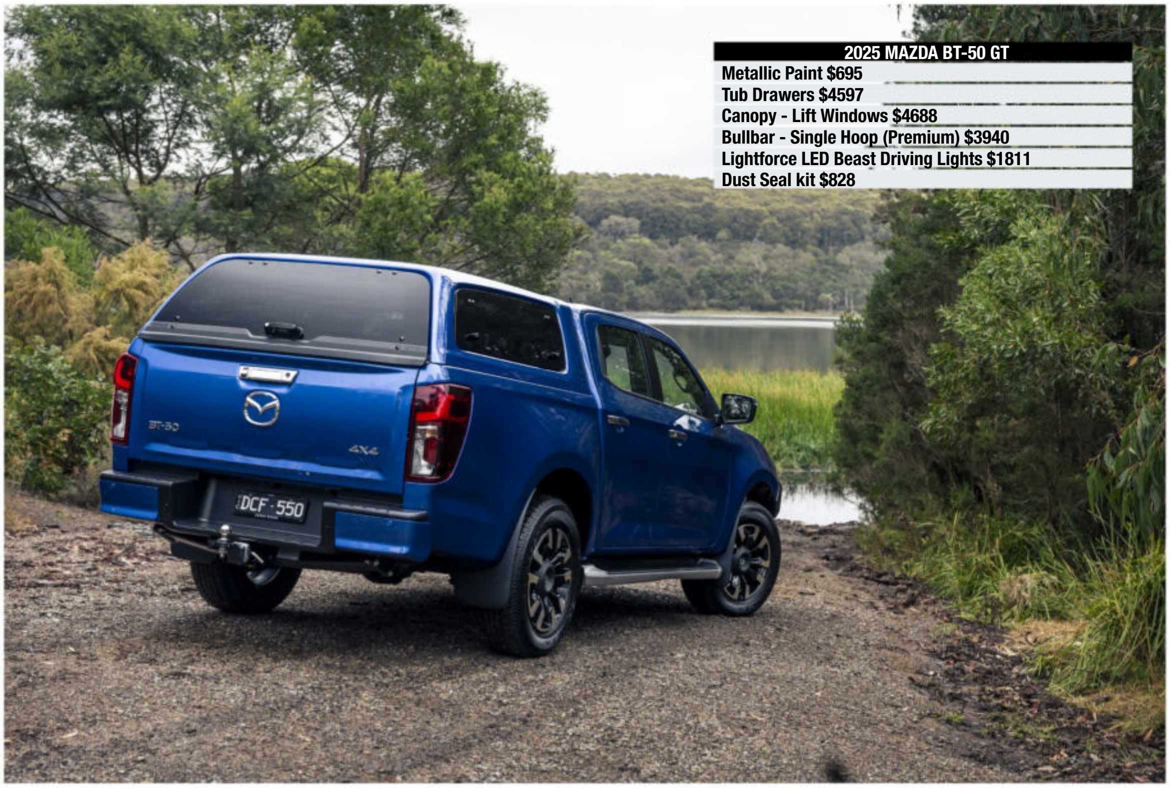
The powertrain is the familiar Isuzu 3.0-litre diesel backed by an Aisin six-speed auto and part-time/dual-range 4x4 with a rear diff lock and Rough Terrain mode button. It's well-proven and, while it might not be at the pointy end of performance, it gets the job done without messing around.

We just picked it up and initial impressions tell us we'll appreciate the luxury features and spec of the GT model as well as the added functionality and security that the accessories add to the car.

We're hitting the highway for an interstate road trip with the Mazda over the Easter/ANZAC Day break, so there's a few adventures planned to break up the day-to-day workload that the BT will be helping us out with.

CARPET RIDE
Who says you have to rough it. As the pics hereabouts show, the GT is loaded with luxury quality items.





2025 MAZDA BT-50 GT
Metallic Paint $695
Tub Drawers $4597
Canopy - Lift Windows $4688
Bullbar - Single Hoop (Premium) $3940
Lightforce LED Beast Driving Lights $1811
Dust Seal kit $828

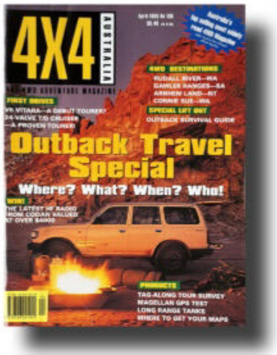
TRUE BLUE
The colour-matched canopy adds functionality amd decurity to our Mazda ute.

THE SCORE

THE ESSENTIAL NUMBERS AND PRICES OF EVERY 4X4 ON SALE IN AUSTRALIA

REAR VIEW

4X4 AUSTRALIA LOOKS BACK AT THE CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY, THE RISE IN OUTBACK TOURING, THE EVOLUTIONARY SOPHISTICATION OF 4X4S, AND MORE

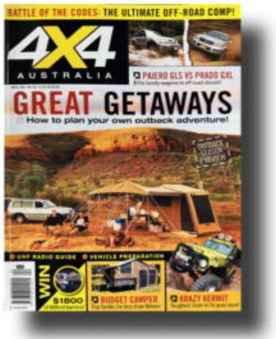


30 YEARS AGO – APRIL 1995

With the outback beckoning, our April issue was jam-packed with all you needed to know and be aware of for a trip to our remote country. We had destination stories from Rudall River in Western Australia, the Gawler Ranges in South Australia, Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory and along the Connie Sue Highway in WA.

Our equipment reviews included an in-depth survey of all the 4x4 tagalong tour operators in Oz, as well as reviews on long-range fuel tanks and Magellan GPS units. We also included a lift-out Outback Survival Guide, a handy reference for when things go wrong when you are far from home. It would be pretty handy today!

Of course, we had a couple of vehicle tests including a first drive of the Suzuki Vitara V6 and the Toyota LandCruiser 24-valve turbo-diesel; we'd love to have one of those Cruisers now!



20 YEARS AGO – APRIL 2005

There was a heap of 'normal' vehicles to tease and please you in this issue from a Holden Adventra V6 to a turbo-diesel version of the Hyundai Terracan, as well as a comparison between Toyota's petrol-powered V6 Prado and Mitsubishi's V6 Pajero. Surprisingly, while the Prado took the accolades for the all-round better vehicle, the Pajero was deemed to be far better in the rough stuff.

Tempting you to get out and about, Al Whiting was travelling the Barry Way as an alternative route through the mountains of Victoria and NSW. Meanwhile, Moonie was wandering Oz checking out lighthouses that are dotted right across the continent, while Mick Hutton was struggling to break through on the Callawa Track, something that would be even harder to do today.

10 YEARS AGO – APRIL 2015

Diesel Warfare was the name of the game for this month's comparison test that pitted a Prado D4-D against a Jeep Cherokee CRD and a Land Rover Discovery TDV6. You could probably guess which one came third, but the winner may be a bit of a surprise. We gave it to the Disco because of its on-road finesse, its impressive off-road capability and its cabin comfort.

We also drove a Harrop-powered HiLux, the new Pajero GLX, a Ford F-350 Super Duty and drooled over a GM 6.2-litre V8-powered Land Rover Defender that was immaculate in all its detail.

Moonie went out and investigated the reasons behind the number of dual-cab utes that were bending and breaking, and it seems that little has changed in the last 10 years. Overloading and badly set-up suspensions were the major causes.

We went exploring in the Davenport Ranges in the NT, Canunda in SA, Warrabah NP in NSW and island hopped along the Murray River in Victoria; all worthy places to go and explore today.

SHARK JUMPS INTO THE POND, BUT RANGER STILL RULES

Going by the number of them you see on the road, it should come as no surprise that the BYD Shark has leapt into the top five sellers for the month of February with 2026 of the new 4x4 utes finding their way to owners. With a long list of features and sharp pricing it will be interesting to see what BYD can achieve over the coming months as the Shark attack gets into full swing.

The new Chinese brand still has a way to go before it challenges the market leaders – Ranger and HiLux – but it has them firmly in its sights.

Ranger continues to be Australia's top-selling 4x4 so far this year with 3782 units going out to buyers in February. Ford also announced pricing and details of its own PHEV Ranger to dampen the Shark bite and it will be interesting to see how that battle ensues.

HiLux remains a consistent seller with 3099 of them hitting the streets, while Toyota's new Prado continues its comeback with the 250 Series selling 2723 units. Toyota is selling every Prado it can get into the country at the moment but we are hearing that, depending on what model you're after, there are vehicles available to drive away from dealers now. It seems the high-spec Prados like the Altitude and Kakadu still have long wait times.

Speaking of big wagons, February was a particularly slow month for LandCruiser 300 with just 292 being sold compared to 522 Nissan Patrols. This puts the Patrol ahead of LandCruiser sales for the year with 1443 Patrols sold so far to just 705 Cruisers. We're sure the Toyota dealers will say it's because all the buyers are getting into new Prados.

Great Wall Motors is looking to raise its stake in the ute market with the updated Cannon going on sale this month. As it sits, the Cannon sits just outside the top 10 selling 4x4s in year-to-date terms in 11th place. With 1190 units sold this year, look for the Cannon to move up in the charts as the new model appears in dealers.

Also hitting the market soon is the Ram 1500 with its new inline six-cylinder turbo-petrol engine. It seems owners have flocked to get the last of the Hemi V8 powered Rams with 224 of them finding homes, compared to 155 Ford F-150s, 99 Chevy Silverados, and just 78 Toyota Tundras. It will be interesting to see how the new six-cylinder Ram is received, leaving the Chevy as the only V8 sold in the 1500 class here in Australia.

JUST THE FACTS

Top-selling 4x4s in February 2025
Source: VFACTS

VEHICLE	UNITS
1. Ford Ranger	3782
2. Toyota HiLux	3099
3. Toyota Prado	2723
4. BYD Shark	2026
5. Isuzu D-MAX	1593
6. Mitsubishi Triton	1242
7. Ford Everest	1207
8. Mazda BT-50	1176
9. Nissan Navara	739
10. Toyota LC79	731

Top-selling 4x4s year-to-date to February 2025
Source: VFACTS

VEHICLE	UNITS
1. Ford Ranger	7775
2. Toyota Hilux	5893
3. Toyota Prado	5570
4. Isuzu D-MAX	3270
5. Ford Everest	2886
6. Mitsubishi Triton	2293
7. Mazda BT-50	2173
8. BYD Shark	2026
9. Isuzu MU-X	1499
10. Toyota LandCruiser 79	1461

FORD 5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

RANGER

The next-gen Ranger took the best-seller crown away from HiLux in 2023. Full-time 4x4 is offered on all V6 models and the 2.0TD Wildtrak X. There is a price hike across the range this month.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Single XL C/C	47,980	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	1903	1327	3500	80
Super XL C/C	50,480	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2007	1223	3500	80
Super XL P/U	52,380	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2167	1063	3500	80
Double XL C/C	48,980	SiT4/2.0	A6	405	125	2046	1144	3500	80
Double XL C/C	51,780	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2072	1158	3500	80
Double XL P/U	50,880	SiT4/2.0	A6	405	125	2190	1000	3500	80
Double XL P/U	53,680	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2216	1014	3500	80
Double XLS P/U	57,630	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2216	1014	3500	80
Super XLT P/U	61,390	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2178	1052	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	63,390	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2225	1005	3500	80
Double XLT C/C	65,690	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2129	1151	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	63,640	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2217	1015	3500	80
Double XLT P/U	68,840	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2285	995	3500	80
Double Sport P/U	66,140	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2242	988	3500	80
Double Sport P/U	71,340	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2300	980	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak P/U	69,640	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2295	985	3500	80
Dbl Tremor P/U	69,690	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2419	901	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak P/U	74,840	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	2353	997	3500	80
Dbl Wildtrak X P/U	77,640	BiT4/2.0	A10	500	154	2432	918	3500	80
Dbl Platinum P/U	80,640	V6/3.0	A10	600	184	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Dbl Raptor P/U	90,440	V6P/3.0	A10	583	292	2431	753	2500	80

EVEREST

Everest's four variants are joined by two more – the Wildtrak and Tremor – sitting between Sport and Platinum and available with the 3.0-litre TDV6 donk. There's also a price increase for this month.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Ambiente	59,240	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2367	733	3500	80
Trend	67,040	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2383	717	3500	80
Sport	74,640	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2454	696	3500	80
Tremor	76,590	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Wildtrak	76,950	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2488	662	3500	80
Platinum	81,200	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2492	658	3500	80

F150

Ford Australia has brought the F150 back to our shores with two models available in two wheelbases. The long wheelbase adds $995 to the price and also gets you a longer cargo bed.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
XLT (SWB)	106,950	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	2451	769	4500	136
XLT (LWB)	107,945	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	N/A	N/A	4500	136
Lariat (SWB)	139,950	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	2555	710	4500	136
Lariat (LWB)	140,945	V6TP/3.5	A10	678	298	N/A	N/A	4500	136

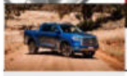
BYD 5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

SHARK6

Build Your Dreams first entry to the Australian market is the Shark double0cab ute and it comes with a hybrid EV powertrain and a preper 4x4 system

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Shark 6 Premium	57,900	T4PHEV/1.5	CVT	650	321	2710	790	2500	60

GWM 7-year/unlimited km **www.gmwute.com.au**



UTE

GWM's next-gen Cannon features a more grunty 2.4-litre turbo-diesel four-cylinder donk (replacing the previous-gen 2.0TD) , backed by a nine-speed auto gearbox. It also has a higher braked towing capacity.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Lux	40,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
Ultra	43,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
Vanta	45,490*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	995	3500	75
XSR	49,990*	L4TD/2.4	A9	480	135	2230	875	3500	75

TANK 300

The Tank 300's duo of 2.0-litre petrol-electric hybrid versions are now joined by two 2.0-litre petrol-only powered rigs at significantly lower asking prices.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Tank 300 Lux	46,990	L4TP/2.0	A8	380	162	2155	N/A	2500	75
Tank 300 Ultra	50,990	L4TP/2.0	A8	380	162	2155	N/A	2500	75
Tank 300 Lux H	55,990	L4HY/2.0	A9	640	224	2331	N/A	2500	75
Tank 300 Ultra H	60,990	L4HY/2.0	A9	640	224	2331	N/A	2500	75

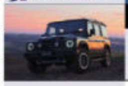
GMSV **www.gmspecialtyvehicles.com.au**

CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500

For 2023 Chevrolet dropped the previous entry-level model, the LT Trail Boss. A new hero ZR2 model is now positioned at the top of the two-model range. Both powered by a 6.2-litre petrol V8.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
ZR2	138,000*	V8/6.2	A10	624	313	2583	717	4200	91
LTZ Premium	163,000	V8/6.2	A10	624	313	2543	757	4500	91

INEOS **www.ineosgrenadier.com/en/au/**



GRENADIER

Ineos brings back the simple, durable 4x4 vehicle that adventurers and organisations want for serious off-road travel, available with both petrol and diesel powertrains and two-seat (2s) or five-seat (5s) interiors.

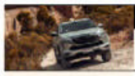
	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Utility wagon 2s	104,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2618	932	3500	90
Fieldmaster 2s	122,000	I6D/3.0	A8	550	183	2693	857	3500	90
Trialmaster 2s	122,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Station wagon 5s	105,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Trialmaster 5s	123,000	I6P/3.0	A8	450	210	2643	907	3500	90
Fieldmaster 5s	123,000	I6D/3.0	A8	550	183	2718	832	3500	90

ISUZU UTE 6-year/150,000km **www.isuzuute.com.au**

D-MAX

D-MAX has cut its links with GM and is an all-Isuzu affair. The latest model is a huge step up with class-leading safety tech, more power and torque from the 3.0L, and fresh, aggressive styling.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
SX Single c/c	42,700	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140	1780	1310	3500	76
SX Space c/c	48,200	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1860	1240	3500	76
LS-M Crew c/c	54,300	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2030	1070	3500	76
LS-U Crew c/c	61,000	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1970	1130	3500	76
LS-U Space p/u	59,500	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2000	1100	3500	76
SX Crew c/c	49,200	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	1910	1190	3500	76
SX Crew p/u	50,700	I4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	N/A	N/A	3000	76
SX Crew p/u	52,700	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2035	1065	3500	76
LS-M Crew p/u	55,800	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2030	1070	3500	76
X-Rider Crew p/u	59,500	I4TD/3.0	6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	76
LS-U Crew p/u	59,000	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2045	1055	3500	76
LS-U+ Crew p/u	65,500	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2115	985	3500	76
X-Terrain Crew p/u	67,990	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2130	970	3500	76
Blade Crew p/u	76,990*	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	76



MU-X

Isuzu's seven-seat wagon based on the D-MAX ute underpinnings, but with a smooth-riding coil-spring rear suspension. Buyers have the option of the tried-and-true 3.0-litre TD or new 1.9-litre oiler.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
LS-M	53,400	L4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	2140	735	3000	80
LS-M	55,400	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2092	658	3500	80
LS-U	59,900	L4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	2088	685	3000	80
LS-U	61,900	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2142	608	3500	80
LS-T	67,990	L4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2157	593	3500	80
Tour Mate									

JEEP 5-year/unlimited km **www.jeep.com.au**

WRANGLER

JL Wrangler has true off-road credentials and great versatility. In Rubicon-spec, the Wrangler is an absolute off-road weapon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Rubicon (2D)	82,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1762	551	1497	81
Sport S (4D)	75,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	N/A	N/A	2495	81
Overland (4D)	83,950	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1900	560	2495	81
Rubicon (4D)	89,450	I4TP/2.0	A8	400	200	1992	570	2495	81

GRAND CHEROKEE

Jeep's fifth-gen Grand Cherokee five-seater runs a grunty V6 petrol engine across most models, with a PHEV powerplant available on the new 4xe variant.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	65,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Limited	72,950	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Overland	77,750	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2167	N/A	2813	87
Summit Res. 4xe	110,850	L4PHY/2.0	A8	637	280	2536	N/A	2722	72

GRAND CHEROKEE L

The seven-seat Grand Cherokee runs V6 petrol power exclusively. Four variants on offer, with Overland and Summit Reserve featuring Jeep's Quadra-Lift air suspension.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	69,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2190	N/A	2813	87
Limited	75,950	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2190	N/A	2813	87
Overland	80,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2270	N/A	2813	87
Summit Reserve	90,450	V6/3.6	A8	344	210	2270	N/A	2813	87

GLADIATOR

Jeep's double-cab pick-up comes in two spec levels, with the Pentastar V6 and 8-speed auto in both. The Night Eagle is the entry level while the Rubicon is the better equipped off-roader.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Night Eagle	78,250	V6/3.6P	A8	347	209	2104	693	2721	83
Rubicon	87,250	V6/3.6P	A8	347	209	2215	693	2721	83

LAND ROVER

www.landrover.com.au

DEFENDER 90

Defender 90 range closely mimics the 110 wagon range but in a shorter three-door wagon body. Right from the four-cylinder petrol motors, through the various diesels, and up to the stonking V8.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D90 P300	80,540	I4/2.0P	A8	400	221	2074	N/A	3500	90
D90 S P300	88,870	I4/2.0P	A8	400	221	2074	N/A	3500	90
D90 S D250	92,626	I6/3.0D	A8	570	183	2303	667	3500	89
D90 SE P400	110,870	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	2141	N/A	3500	90
D90 X P400	154,546	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	2141	N/A	3500	90
D90 P525	191,288	V8/5.0P	A8	625	386	2470	N/A	3000	90

DEFENDER 110

The 'new' Defender has been around for a while now, with incremental increases in power/torque outputs, engine options and (sadly) pricing along the way. Its bling exterior belies its off-road capability.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
P400 S	93,907	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 SE	108,795	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 SE	114,165	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 HSE	128,815	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 HSE	124,040	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 X	157,224	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
D350 Sedona Ed.	134,706	I6/3.0D	A8	700	257	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 X	150,620	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400e SE	126,275	I4PH/2.0P	A8	640	297	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400e HSE	137,975	I4PH/2.0P	A8	640	297	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P525 V8	198,914	V8/5.0P	A8	625	386	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P635 OCTA	291,542	V8/5.0P	A8	750	467	N/A	N/A	3500	90

DEFENDER 130

The largest-ever Defender is here and brings with it a lot more rear cargo space, along with some sweet powerplant options for this biggest of Brit off-roaders.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D300 X-Dyna SE	129,365	I6/3.0D	A8	650	220	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P400 X-Dyna SE	133,471	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	NA	3500	90
P400 Outbound	135,562	I6/3.0P	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P500	216,1970	V8/5.0P	A8	610	368	N/A	N/A	3500	90

DISCOVERY

Land Rover Discovery combines excellent on-road dynamics with impressive off-road capability. Strong performance comes via the choice of V6 turbo-diesel or V6 petrol powerplants.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D350 S Dynamic	116,006	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2109	831	3500	90
D350 SE Dynamic	123,564	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90
D350 HSE Dynam	130,405	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90
D350 35th Anniv.	133,176	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	257	2236	814	3500	90
P360 S RDynamic	121,539	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90
P360 SE Dynamic	122,070	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90
P360 HSE Dynam	128,430	I6TP/3.0	A8	500	265	2236	814	3500	90

RANGE ROVER SPORT

There are six Rangie Sport models to choose from in this latest incarnation, with both the diesel (in three different outputs), and petrol powerplants featuring mild-hybrid tech.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D250 SE	144,915	I6TD/3.0	A8	600	183	2390	830	3500	80
D300 SE Dynamic	155,876	I6TD/3.0	A8	650	221	2390	830	3500	80
D350 HSE Dyn	173,826	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	258	2435	785	3500	80
D350 Autobio	197,176	I6TD/3.0	A8	700	225	2435	830	3500	80
P360 SE Dynamic	139,000	I6P/3.0	A8	500	265	2271	N/A	3500	80
P400 SE Dynamic	160,576	I6P/3.0	A8	550	294	2316	N/A	3500	80
P400 HSE Dyn	172,676	I6P/3.0	A8	550	294	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460 HSE Dyn	188,100	I6P/3.0	A8	660	338	2730	720	3500	80
P460 Autobio	211,488	I6P/3.0	A8	660	338	2730	720	3500	80
P530 Autobio	233,961	V8TTP/4.4	A8	750	390	2436	814	3500	80
P635 SV Edition	359,715	V8TTP/4.4	A8	750	467	N/A	N/A	3500	80

RANGE ROVER

Bespoke personalisation and new hybrid powertrains herald in revised Range Rover line-up.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
D350 HSE	258,489	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460e HSE	263,468	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
P460e LWB HSE	270,880	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
P530 HSE	282,500	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P460e Autobiog.	296,427	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
D350 A/B	298,659	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P460e LWB A/B	298,999	I6e/3.0	A8	660	338	N/A	N/A	3000	72
D350 LWB A/B	304,530	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
D350 LWB 7s A/B	306,075	I6/3.0	A8	700	258	N/A	N/A	3500	80
P530 Autobiog.	331,434	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P530 LWB A/B	337,614	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P530 LWB 7s A/B	339,314	V8/4.4	A8	750	390	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P615 SV	395,655	V8/4.4	A8	750	452	N/A	N/A	3500	90
P615 LWB SV	443,436	V8/4.4	A8	750	452	N/A	N/A	3500	90

LDV

7-year/200,000km www.ldvautomotive.com.au

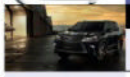
T60

Chinese ute brings five-star safety to the budget-priced dual-cab segment. Revamped in 2021, with the Pro variants bringing more power and redesigned front-end.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Max Pro (manual)	41,042	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	N/A	935	3000	73
Max Pro (auto)	43,148	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	N/A	925	3000	73
Max Luxe (manual)	45,779	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	N/A	935	3000	73
Max Luxe (auto)	47,884	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Luxe Mega Tub	49,463	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Plus (manual)	48,411	I4/2.0	M6	500	160	2900	925	3000	73
Max Plus Mega Tub	52,095	I4/2.0	A8	500	160	N/A	N/A	3000	73

LEXUS

5-year/unlimited www.lexus.com.au



LX

Now with two powerplant options – the diesel is a trick twin-turbo V6; the petrol is rorty, if not as glorious as the previous-gen V8 – and improved dynamics, this is now capital "L" for luxury with bite.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
LX500	155,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 SL	172,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 SL (7-seat)	175,576	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX500 F Sport	178,976	V6TTD/3.3	A10	700	227	2690	TBC	3500	80
LX600	159,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 SL	176,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 SL (7-seat)	180,276	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 F Sport	182,476	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110
LX600 Ultra Lux	217,976	V6TTP/3.5	A10	650	305	2660	TBC	3500	110

MAHINDRA

5-year/unlimited www.mahindra.com.au

PIK-UP

Now dual-cab only and still with the option of tub or no tub, this tough and reliable farm truck is proving popular out bush and is good bang for your workhorse bucks.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Dual Cab	39,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	330	103	1940	1210	2500	80

SCORPIO

It may be missing some key safety technology, but the Scorpio six-seater isn't just a good value-for-money package, it's a good rig overall.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Z8	41,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	129	1900	525	2500	57
Z8L	45,990*	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	129	2100	510	2500	57

*This is a nationwide drive-away price, not a list price, and includes on-roads.

MAZDA

5-year/unlimited km **www.mazda.com.au**

BT-50

The BT-50 has stepped away from its Ford roots, as Mazda partnered with Isuzu for the new model. That means Isuzu powertrains and class-leading safety wrapped in a svelte Mazda skin.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Dual XS p/u	52,930	I4TD/1.9	A6	350	110	1935	1165	3500	76
Single XT c/c	43,520	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1186	3500	76
Single XT c/c	46,733	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1186	3500	76
Extra XT c/c	47,020	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1135	3500	76
Extra XT c/c	49,953	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1135	3500	76
Dual XT c/c	51,960	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1096	3500	76
Dual XT c/c	51,330	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1106	3500	76
Dual XT p/u	52,730	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1095	3500	76
Dual XT p/u	55,080	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1090	3500	76
Dual XTR c/c	57,880	I4TD./.0	A6	450	140	1910	1190	3500	76
Dual XTR p/u	56,780	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1080	3500	76
Dual XTR p/u	60,623	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1070	3500	76
Dual GT p/u	57,090	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140		1075	3500	76
Dual GT p/u	62,660	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140		1065	3500	76
Dual SP p/u	63,090	I4TD/3.0	M6	450	140	2198	902	3500	76
Dual SP p/u	68,690	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2208	892	3500	76
Dual Thunder p/u	74,095	I4TD/3.0	A6	450	140	2213	887	3500	76

MERCEDES

3-year/200,000km **www.mercedes-benz.com.au**

G-CLASS

With triple diff locks, long-travel coil suspension and rugged construction, Merc's Gelandewagen is off-road heritage writ large. Unfortunately, so is the price tag on an updated 30-year-old design.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
G63 AMG	259,600	V8/4.0	A9	850	430	2560	640	3500	100
G400d	233,776	I6/2.9	A9	700	243	2489	661	3500	112

MITSUBISHI

7-year/150,000km **www.mitsubishi-motors.com.au**

PAJERO SPORT

Pajero Sport replaced the Challenger in Mitsubishi's 4x4 range. It's still on a Triton ute chassis but with rear coils under the back and bespoke bodywork. 2020 refresh added Dynamic Shield front end.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GLX (5-seat)	51,540	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2145	630	3100	68
GLS (7s)	56,890	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2195	580	3100	68
GLS Deluxe (7s)	57,440	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2204	571	3100	68
Exceed (7s)	62,590	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2209	566	3100	68
GSR (7s)	64,840	L4TD/2.4	A8	430	133	2209	566	3100	68

TRITON

MR Triton consists of a four-model line-up that tops out with the GSR. All models get a 2.4-litre, turbocharged diesel engine with a six-speed transmission.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GLX Single c/c	33,240	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1660	1235	3000	75
GLX Single c/c	37,490	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1665	1235	3000	75
GLX Club c/c	39,940	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1765	1135	3000	75
GLX ADAS Club c/c	39,040	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1780	1120	3000	75
GLX Dual c/c	41,440	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1795	1105	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual c/c	39,790	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1795	1105	3100	75
GLX+ Club p/u	45,440	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1930	970	3100	75
GLX Dual p/u	37,490	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1920	980	3100	75
GLX Dual p/u	50,940	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1920	980	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual p/u	38,540	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1951	949	3100	75
GLX ADAS Dual p/u	41,040	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1956	944	3100	75
GLX+ Dual p/u	44,940	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1915	985	3100	75
GLX+ Dual p/u	53,290	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1915	985	3100	75
GLX-R	41,990	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	N/A	N/A	3100	75
GLX-R	56,740	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	N/A	N/A	3100	75
GLS Dual p/u	45,440	L4TD/2.4	M6	430	133	1935	965	3100	75
GLS Dual p/u	59,090	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1935	965	3100	75
GLS Premium	52,790	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	2042	848	3100	75
GSR	63,840	L4TD/2.4	A6	430	133	1999	901	3100	75

NISSAN

5-year/unlimited km **www.nissan.com.au**

PATROL Y62

In a segment that drinks diesel, top-spec Patrol is available in V8-petrol guise only. Fully independent suspension is backed by electronic traction aids. Updated model launched late in 2019.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Ti	89,260	V8/5.6	A7	560	298	2812	688	3500	140
Ti-L	101,960	V8/5.6	A7	560	298	2708	746	3500	140
PRO-4X Warrior	105,520	V8/5.6	A7	560	289	2884	736	3500	140

NAVARA D23

The latest iteration of Nissan's D23 Navara ute range arrives with a bolder look and a revised line-up. Pro-4X Warrior has to be the best navara produced ever!.

Single SL c/c	40,928	L4TD/2.3	M6	403	120	1614	1296	3500	80
King SL c/c	47,428	L4TD/2.3	A7	403	120	1727	1183	3500	80
King SL p/u	49,228	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1941	969	3500	80
King ST-X p/u	59,323	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1944	966	3500	80
Dual SL c/c	46,428	L4TD/2.3	M6	403	120	1759	1147	3500	80
Dual SL p/u	48,228	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	1823	1087	3500	80
Dual ST p/u	53,333	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	N/A	N/A	3500	80
Dual ST-X p/u	56,823	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	1917	993	3500	80
Dual ST-X p/u	58,270	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	1921	989	3500	80
Dual SL Warrior	59,628	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	2169	1081	3500	80
PRO-4X	59,783	L4TD/2.3	M6	450	140	2186	724	3500	80
PRO-4X Warrior	69,143	L4TD/2.3	A7	450	140	2151	1019	3500	80

RAM

3-year/100,000 km **www.ramtrucks.com.au**

RAM 1500

You'll find Ram trucks here from various importers, but the official distributor is Ram Trucks Australia. Currently selling the DT Ram 1500.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Laramie	137,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2617	833	4500	98
Laramie Sport	141,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2671	779	4500	98
Big Horn	119,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	N/A	N/A	4500	98
Limited	156,950	V8P/5.7	A8	556	291	2749	701	4500	98
TRX	224,950	V8P/6.2	A8	882	523	3033	767	3500	125

RAM 2500

The 2500 is the first of the heavy duty Ram models and is only available in Laramie specification in Australia. Powered by the Cummins in-line six, the 2500 is a torque monster and towing champion.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
2500 Laramie	172,950	I6d/6.7	A6	1152	276	3660	835	4500	117

RAM 3500

The 1500 is the standard model while the 2500 and 3500 Rams are the Heavy Duty versions packing HD drivelines, Cummins diesel engines and huge lowing capacities. New HD models also coming soon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
Laramie Crew	177,950	I6TD/6.7	A6	1152	276	3596	1713	6170*	132

SSANGYONG

7-year/unlimited km **www.ssangyong.com.au**

MUSSO

Thrifty South Korean dual-cab has been reborn with more subdued styling and an unbeatable warranty. XLV variant adds segment-topping tray length to the line-up's killer pricing.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
EX	30,490	L4TD/2.2	M6	400	133	2177	703	3500	75
EX	32,490	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
ELX	40,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
Ultimate	45,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2192	688	3500	75
ELX XLV	33,990	L4TD/2.2	M6	400	133	2160	1025	3500	75
ELX XLV	41,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	1025	3500	75
Ultimate XLV	46,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75
Ultimate Luxury	48,000	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75
Ult. Luxury XLV	49,500	L4TD/2.2	A6	400	133	2170	880	3500	75

REXTON

The South Korean manufacturer's large wagon now has three variants and a smooth-shifting eight-speed auto gear box. It is loaded with kit and comes with a lean price tag.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
ELX	50,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Adventure	54,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Ultimate	58,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70
Ultimate Sport	60,000	L4TD/2.2	A8	441	148	2233	727	3500	70

SUZUKI 3-year/100,000km www.suzuki.com.au

JIMNY

Pint-sized cult classic returns in fourth-gen guise. Live axles front and rear and retro styling means it will remain a favourite on the off-road scene.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
3-door Hardtop	28,490	L4/1.5	M5	130	75	1095	340	1300	40
3-door Hardtop	29,990	L4/1.5	A4	130	75	1110	325	1300	40

TOYOTA 5-year/unlimited km www.toyota.com.au

PRADO

The all-new 250 Prado is here. It is porkier than the 150, has lower payloads, less fuel capacity, higher tow-rating, the 2.8TD donk carries over, and prices have jumped, so it's a curious mix. Will sell like crazy.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GX	72,500	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2495	605	3500	110
GXL	79,990	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2535	615	3500	110
VX	87,400	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2570	610	3500	110
Altitude	92,700	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2520	660	3500	110
Kakadu	87,468	I4TD/2.8	A8	500	150	2595	605	3500	110

FORTUNER

Toyota's HiLux-based seven-seat wagon competes with Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and Isuzu MU-X. Smaller than a Prado but still a proper 4x4 wagon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
GX	53,775	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2175	625	3100	80
GXL	58,895	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2185	615	3100	80
Crusade	66,755	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2190	610	3100	80

LAND CRUISER 300 SERIES

It's out with the V8s and in with an all-new V6 diesel engine in the new 300 Series Land Cruiser. There are now six models in the range including the new GR Sport and Sahara ZX models.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	–TOWING	FUEL
GX	96,991	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2495	785	3500	110
GXL	108,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2580	700	3500	110
VX	120,991	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
Sahara	138,191	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
GR Sport	145,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2630	650	3500	110
Sahara ZX	144,791	V6TD/3.3L	A10	700	227	2610	670	3500	110

LAND CRUISER 70

The 70 Series Cruiser has built a reputation as a load-hauler extraordinaire. Available as long-wheelbase Troopie or five-door, mid-wheelbase wagon.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate Troopy	77,200	I4TD/2.8	M5	450	150	N/A	N/A	3500	130
GXL Troopy	80,500	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2360	1115	3500	130
WorkMate wagon	75,600	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2320	1190	3500	130
GXL Wagon	77,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2300	1210	3500	130

LAND CRUISER 70 CAB-CHASSIS

Still the king of the country when it comes to a reliable workhorse. Safety updates and that steady 2.8TD with six-speed auto is a winning combo.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate single c/c	76,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2145	1365	3500	130
GX single c/c	78,800	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2130	1380	3500	130
GXL single c/c	80,900	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2130	1380	3500	130

LAND CRUISER 79 DOUBLE CAB

Tough-as-nails and with room for five, the LC79 dual-cab uses the 2.8TD engine backed by a smooth-shifting six-speed auto (for $2k less, you can opt for a five-speed manual).

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
WorkMate dual c/c	77,300	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2205	1310	3500	130
GXL dual c/c	81,500	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2185	1325	3500	130

HILUX

The N80 Hilux with a new 2.8-litre engine, six-speed transmissions and a beefed-up towing capacity. A facelift and more power for the 2021 model adds to its appeal.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
W'Mate Single c/c	40,965	I4TD/2.4	M6	400	110	1775	1225	3200	80
W'Mate Extra c/c	46,665	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	1890	1110	3000	80
W'Mate Dual c/c	48,735	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	1915	1085	3000	80
W'Mate Dual p/u	48,235	I4TD/2.4	M6	400	110	2045	955	3200	80
W'Mate Dual p/u	50,420	I4TD/2.4	A6	400	110	2045	955	3000	80
SR Single c/c	44,035	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1795	1205	3500	80
SR Single c/c	44,590	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1795	1205	3200	80
SR Extra c/c	48,695	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1890	1110	3500	80
SR Extra c/c	48,250	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1895	1155	3200	80
SR Dual c/c	48,510	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	1955	1045	3500	80
SR Dual c/c	50,660	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	1955	1045	3200	80
SR Dual p/u	52,455	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	2050	950	3500	80
SR Dual p/u	52,010	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	955	3200	80
SR5 Extra p/u	60,250	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	1005	3200	80
SR5 Dual p/u	60,676	I4TD/2.8	M6	420	150	2040	960	3500	80
SR5 Dual p/u	63,260	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2045	955	3200	80
Rogue Dual p/u	71,530	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2174	826	3200	80
Rugged X Dual p/u	69,990	I4TD/2.8	A6	500	150	2252	748	3200	80
GR Sport	73,990	I4TD/2.8	A6	550	165	N/A	N/A	3500	80

VOLKSWAGEN 5-year/unlimited km www.volkswagen.com.au

AMAROK

The second-gen Amarok shares much of its underpinnings with the next-gen Ford Ranger. Four engines are on offer in the line-up including the V6 shared with the Ford, as well as a 2.3-litre petrol.

	PRICE	ENGINE	TRANS	TORQUE	POWER	WEIGHT	LOAD	TOWING	FUEL
TDI405 Core	50,990	L4TD/2.0	M6	405	125	2185	1065	3500	80
TDI405 Core	52,990	L4TD/2.0	A6	405	125	2208	1042	3500	80
TDI500 Life 2.0	56,990	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2242	988	3500	80
TDI500 Style	66,990	L4TD/2.0	A10	500	154	2271	1009	3500	80
TDI600 Style	70,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2319	1031	3500	80
TDI600 PanAm	75,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2319	1031	3500	80
TDI600 Aventura	79,990	V6TD/3.0	A10	600	184	2332	858	3500	80
TSI452 Aventura	79,990	L4P/2.3	A8	452	222	2228	872	3500	80

MINOR UPDATES FOR SILVERADO 2500

The 2025 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 HD has received a minor update, with the 1322Nm behemoth wearing a new look and a steeper sticker price.

The Silverado 2500 HD LTZ Premium is now priced at $166,500 in Australia (excluding on-road costs), which is an increase of $3500 for a vehicle which previously cost $163,000.

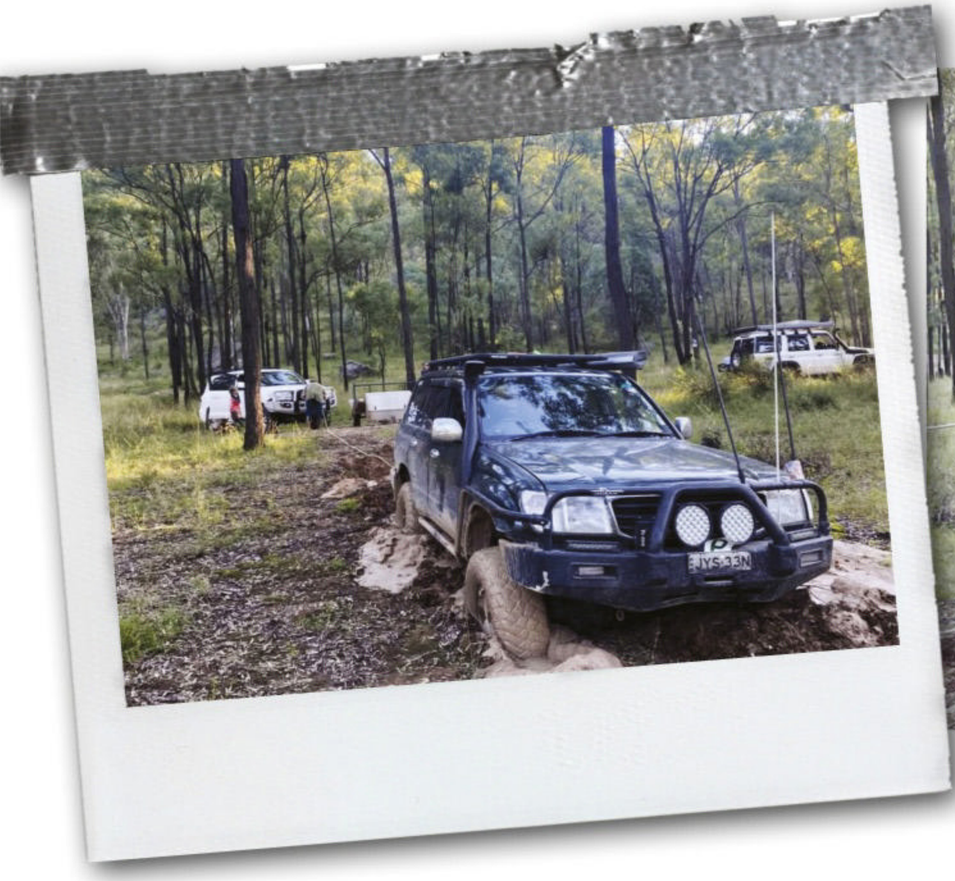
For that coin, the flagship pickup truck for GMSV has been freshened up with a suite of design tweaks including the addition of blacked-out front and rear bumpers; red recovery hooks; and 20-inch high-gloss black alloy wheels with black centre caps. However, no other changes have been implemented, mechanical or otherwise.

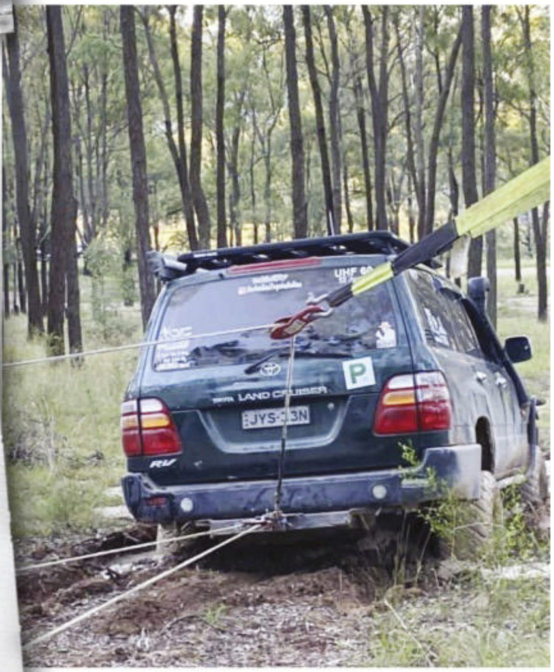
This means the monster 350kW-1322Nm 6.6-litre Duramax turbo-diesel V8 running through a 10-speed auto remains, helping to give the ute its favourable 4500kg braked towing capacity. This capacity – combined with trailer-equipped Adaptive Cruise Control, an In-Vehicle Trailering app with Trailer Profiles, and large vertical power-adjustable trailering mirrors – makes it a towing powerhouse.

The big rig is also luxurious, with leather-appointed seating (heated and ventilated in the front; and heated in the rear); a heated leather steering wheel; a powered sunroof; huge screens for infotainment and driver information; and a seven-speaker Bose Premium sound system.

PARTING PIC

SEND TO OUR FB PAGE: @4X4AUS





Tricked by the conditions into thinking he was on solid ground, Jysen soon found out things were not as they seemed.

HIDDEN BOG TRAP

JYSEN BELL

> MILBRODALE, NSW

On a camping jaunt at Milbrodale in the Hunter Valley of NSW, Jysen Bell was out collecting firewood in his twin-locked FZJ105 LandCruiser – fitted with 35s, bar work, a winch and reduction gears – when he spotted a dead tree to cut down just off the main track.

"I left the main path and the rear just sunk," Jysen told *4X4 Australia*. "What looked like solid ground turned soft with three tonnes on it. I put it in four-wheel drive, the front sank and that was it … it was bogged."

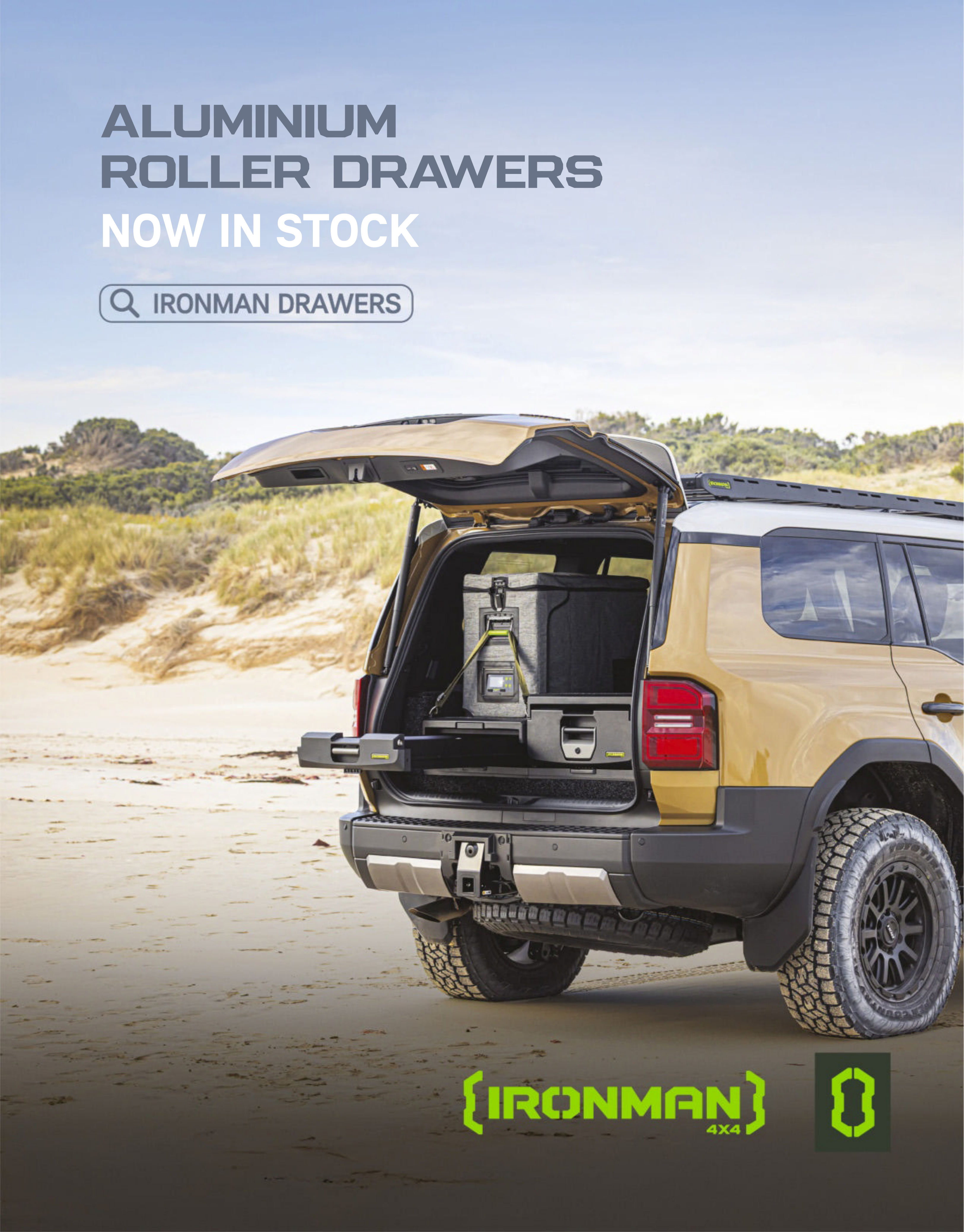
Jysen attempted a double-line pull with his own winch but it just kept digging down, so he rang his father who came out in his 200 Series, along with his mate in a 76 Series.

"We needed two 12,000lb winches to recover the trailer behind my Cruiser. One was used for a double-line pull, and one was up as high as we could get it in the tree to pull it up and out of the mud," Jysen said. "I think it definitely would've been better to go forward with the hill, but we could've gone deeper … it was a hard spot to judge."

If he is ever in a similar situation, Jysen told us he'd try and stick to the main path. "The ground looked dry and hard, but it must've been where water had rained for months and made it soft … didn't help I had 40psi in the tyres."

Jysen is currently going through the process of chopping his Cruiser in to a king cab.

MAXXIS
RAZR
AT-S
THE DAILY LEGEND.
find out more: maxxistyres.com.au
MAXXISTyresAustralia
@Maxxis.Tyres.Australia
Maxxis Tyres Australia
TM250115/01



ALUMINIUM
ROLLER DRAWERS
NOW IN STOCK

IRONMAN DRAWERS

IRONMAN
4X4